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The CLEARING HOUSE

November

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Vol. 23

No. 3

Problem Solving: Discussion Groups Aim at Action . . .
Guidance: 7 Opportunities Neglected by Teachers . . . What
is the Purpose of the Schools? . . . Word Concepts . . . All Play
in High School—Trouble in College

A JOURNAL for MODERN
UNIOR and SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The Clearing House

A journal for modern junior and senior high schools

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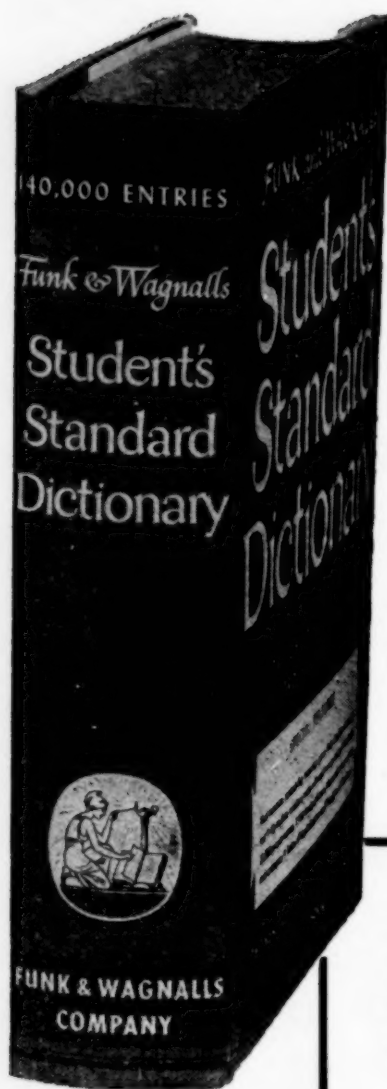
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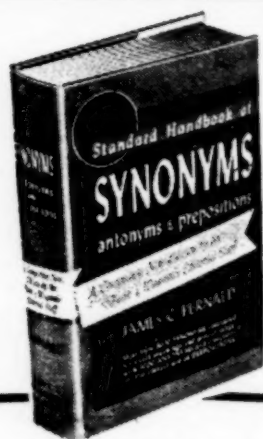
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Industrial Management Research: CLUES TO BETTER ADMINISTRATION

By C. F. McCORMICK

IN ONE six-month period during the past two years there were twelve major walkouts in public-school systems, which involved more than two thousand teachers and fifty thousand school children.

Ostensibly the reason for the walkouts was low salaries. At least this is the reason given most publicity by radio and press, and doubtless it is the greatest single reason. However, a careful examination and probing into basic grievances and complaints of the striking teachers reveal a complexity of concrete circumstances which also contributed to the decision to walk out.

In a recent survey of schools and colleges conducted by Benjamin Fine of the *New York Times* a number of these concrete circumstances were uncovered. Among them were insecurity because of weak tenure laws, restriction of personal freedom of teachers by community meddling in their private lives, inadequate retirement measures, hampering of academic freedom by community pressure groups, and lack of opportunity to have a voice in the development of school policies. Teachers in all parts of the country contended that principals, supervisors, and superintendents are arbitrary in making decisions and that

teachers are expected to follow these decisions without opportunity to question them.

In view of such charges it would seem appropriate that educational administration pause to consider its purpose and its practices.

Perhaps it would be wise for educational administration to learn from some of the pioneers in research in industrial management. One of these pioneers is Dr. Elton Mayo of the Division of Research, in the Graduate School of Business Administration at Harvard University. In a book entitled *Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* Dr. Mayo brings together many conclusions which are, in a sense, directives for the administration of industry, based on more than twenty-five years of clinical research in industrial management-labor relations. In these conclusions are many implications for educational administration. It is the purpose of this article to point up these implications.

Dr. Mayo states that an administrator's concept of the nature of man and society is certain to influence his relationships with those with whom he works. If he conceives of society as being static and composed of

"hordes of unorganized individuals actuated by self interest"¹ he will act much differently than if he sees society as constantly changing and made up of individuals eager for and capable of tremendous cooperative endeavor. Dr. Mayo's research has caused him to reject the former of these concepts and vigorously embrace the latter. However, the nature of the changes in our society in recent years has made it increasingly difficult to act consistently with this concept.

The last twenty-five years of scientific, engineering, and industrial development have brought about profound changes in the social structure of civilization.² It has passed from an established society in which technical skills and social skills were developed simultaneously in the individual by virtue of routine relationships, to an adaptive society in which social skills must be consciously developed.³ Emphasis in training and education is still on development of technical skills to the neglect of social skills.

Mayo has stated the three persistent problems of modern large-scale industry as follows:

1. The application of science and technical skill to a material product.
2. The systematization of operations.
3. The organization of sustained cooperation.⁴

It is an obvious fact that the "raw product" with which school management is concerned is profoundly different from that with which industry works. Equally different is the end product. So the analogy of industrial management and school management does not hold for the first of these problems. However, there is striking similarity in the two fields in respect to the other two persistent problems. Both kinds of management have concentrated on the

second problem and have been able to systematize and routinize operations quite successfully. Neither has diligently worked at the crucial problem of organizing for consistent and cordial cooperation.

Rapid expansion in education occurred almost simultaneously with rapid growth in industry. Industry, in a relatively short period, achieved rather remarkable levels of efficiency, through the invention of techniques of mass production, centralization, subordination, and standardization. School administrators, perplexed by increasing problems of expansion, looked to industry and saw these apparently efficient methods of management. It is not strange that they borrowed many of these practices from industry. The strange aspect is that school administrators have not been able to see the differences in the nature of the purposes of the respective institutions. The purpose of industry has been to produce more and more goods that could be sold at prices which people could afford to pay while the purpose of school administration should have been to produce more and more people who could participate effectively and intelligently in a democratic society.

Establishing routine at the operational level is both important and desirable. School administrators must see that the machinery is kept running smoothly, that materials and supplies are furnished where and when needed, that costs of maintenance and operation are kept in line, and that there is efficient performance in other day-by-day matters of an operational nature. But school administration must function with more important purposes in mind than those at the operational level. For the most part it doesn't. It operates as if there had been no changes in civilization as a result of technology.

There is abundant evidence that school administrators have not given sufficient attention to the third persistent problem which has been stated. School management will have to focus on this fundamental

¹ Elton Mayo, *Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945, pp. 38-41.

² Ibid., p. 75.

³ Ibid., p. 13.

⁴ Ibid., p. 85.

problem of establishing methods of free, democratic, cooperative living. In the first place the administrator will have to be more than a structural engineer; he will have to be a social statesman. He will have to come down out of his ivory tower and participate in the arena of practical affairs. For this is the only way to develop the social skills we need. Administration must become the process of working with people to set goals, to build organizational relationships, to distribute responsibility, to develop programs, and to evaluate results. The purpose of school administration must become the purpose of education itself.

Upon the acceptance and practice of this philosophy of administration new functions of the administrator will emerge. He will not be working OVER but WITH other persons for the good of the whole enterprise. Hierarchical structure with a level of policy making and another level of operation must be replaced. This traditional pattern is proving to be neither good democracy nor good administration.

There can be no cooperation without organization. One of the primary responsibilities of administration is to organize on a functional basis. Attention must be given to the pattern of organization and to an outline of procedures which will enable all individuals and groups to carry on their specific tasks. Through careful organization and plans for working, "solitaires"⁸ (individuals who seem unwilling to work with others) can be converted into working groups.

The flow of communication within the organization must be two-directional; often it is in only one direction. The process of communication and interaction within the organization must be never ending, for it is in this manner that vital sentiments, convictions, and influences are developed among the participants.

That this type of administration makes great demands on the administrator no

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dr. McCormick has been studying industrial management research reports to see what light they throw on his own work as a school administrator. In this article he discusses one significant problem that the two fields share—a problem for which a widely accepted solution exists, but on which neither management nor administration has "diligently worked." Dr. McCormick is principal of Jarrett Junior High School, Springfield, Mo.

one can deny. He must have deep interest in the purpose of education; he must be aware of its problems; he must be able to imbue others with a continuing desire to be a part of collective effort. He will understand the various incentives which cause people to be willing to cooperate. "Inadequate incentives mean dissolution, or changes of organization purposes, or failure of cooperation. Hence in all sorts of organizations the affording of adequate incentives becomes the most definitely emphasized task in their existence."⁹

"But what authority will the administrator have under this conception of administration?" someone will ask. It assumes a different kind of authority—a democratic concept of authority which is earned by the executive and delegated by the group. It is authority which provides positive, expanding freedom of action for the entire personnel rather than negative limitation imposed from above by arbitrary personal power. The administrator actually gets his authority because of deeper insight, wider experience, and greater maturity. Only as the administrator encourages the group to share in planning policies and to cooperatively determine procedures, and only as

⁸ Chester I. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938, p. 139.

⁹ Ibid., p. 67.

the groups accept him, do they accept his authority.

This concept is well stated by Barnard. "Authority is the character of a communication (order) in a formal organization by virtue of which it is accepted by a contributor to or 'member' of the organization as governing the action he contributes; that is, as governing or determining what he does or is not to do so far as the organization is concerned. . . ." Therefore, under this definition the decision as to whether an order has authority or not lies with the person to whom it is addressed and does not reside in "persons of authority" or "those who issue orders." Thus authority is really authority of the group over itself, exercised by the administrator for the welfare of the group. How the administrator handles himself and the way he uses this authority will determine the behavior of the group.

Under this type of democratic administration the locus of authority is not rigid and central; it moves from place to place as the situation demands. "Historically speaking the great democracies represent a quest for wisdom in control rather than authority, an attempt to set the locus of decision in any difficulty approximately where the situation demands that it be placed."⁸

There are two other significant cues in Dr. Mayo's book for school administration. One of these relates to the plan for in-service growth of teachers and the other to the methods and content of the curriculum. Dr. Mayo calls attention to the distinction made by William James in 1890 between the two commonplace words for knowledge—knowledge-of-acquaintance and knowledge-about. All civilized languages except English make this distinction. "This distinction, simple as it is, nevertheless is exceedingly important; knowledge-of-acquaintance comes from direct experience

of fact and situation, knowledge-about is the product of reflective and abstract thinking."⁹

Social skills so imperatively needed can only be learned through knowledge-of-acquaintance. Teachers must have experience in practical affairs concerned with the conditions immediately surrounding their working community and with the larger community of which they are a part. School administration must not patronizingly permit them but rather must genuinely encourage them to wrestle with the real problems of salary schedules, formulation of the budget, curriculum planning, sick leaves, tenure, provisions of retirement, legislation, building planning, and all other problems affecting their welfare and the welfare of the community. When teachers work on budgets and help determine what their salaries will be they get a comprehension of all that is involved in getting raises that they couldn't get in any other way. They come into direct contact with the economic realities of their community.

One community teachers' group working on a salary schedule for 1947-48 overrode some of the more enthusiastic but less-informed members of the community by setting the minimum at \$2,000 instead of \$2,400. Their knowledge-of-acquaintance of the ability of the community to pay for education convinced them that the present tax structure would not stand the strain of a \$2,400 minimum and a correspondingly higher maximum. With this kind of wide and genuine participation many of the problems of administration and the grievances of teachers disappear, for the two major problems of morale in business organization will have been squarely met.

"The problems of morale in a business organization break down into two parts: (1) The daily problems of maintaining internal equilibrium within the organization, i.e., maintaining that kind of social organization in which individuals and groups

⁷ Ibid., p. 163.

⁸ Elton Mayo, *Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945, p. xv.

⁹ Ibid., p. 16.

through working together can obtain human satisfactions that will make them willing to contribute their services to the economic objectives of cooperation; and (2) the daily problems of diagnosing possible sources of interference, of locating sore spots, of liquidating human tensions and strains among individuals and groups, of spotting blockages in the channels of communication."¹⁰

Through such participation teachers will improve their technical skills, but more important they will improve their skill in managing people. Their worth to the community will be greatly enhanced, and the attitude of the community toward them will improve.

This kind of administration is a prerequisite to a flexible, liberalized curriculum which values improvement in the quality of living for the learners. "Experience has shown that, in helping teachers to take their proper place in the school organization, the first concern of the administrator should be with the socialization of the teachers with whom he works. It is rather obvious that the faculty is the starting point, for without a body of socialized teachers working cooperatively little progress can be made in socializing young learners. It is also important that teachers

¹⁰ F. J. Roethlisberger, *Management and Morale*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 111.

have some knowledge of desirable practices for implementing a program designed to socialize students and develop their capacities for leadership and service."¹¹

This process of socialization must begin with the youngest learners and continue throughout all the years of schooling.

If schools organize in a manner consistent with the spirit of Dr. Mayo's conclusions, not only will the school grow into a creative democracy, but bridges will be built from the school into the community. Knowledge of acquaintance with the market place, the factory, government, the labor union, the farm, and all other aspects of society will be possessed by all learners to the extent of their ability and maturity. Work education will be an integral part of the curriculum for all the students. This type of education will not only give the learners understanding of their society but will put them in a strategic position to improve that society. This kind of school will receive the support of the community.

The curriculum so briefly suggested here will produce citizens capable of adapting to society. "An adaptive society cannot be controlled by any but adaptive persons."¹²

¹¹ G. Robert Koopman, Alice Miel, and Paul J. Misner, *Democracy in School Administration*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1943, p. 170ff.

¹² Elton Mayo, *Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945, p. xiii.



A Hobby Keeps a Teacher Fresh

Everybody should have a hobby. Perhaps most of all, a teacher needs a hobby. . . . His hobby should be more than a spontaneous fancy. It should intrigue him. And it should not be too expensive.

One schoolman I know is a great lover of flowers and spends many hours in the cultivation of roses. He speaks glibly of his "Queen Mary," his "Sonata," and his "Pinocchio." Another has a workshop in his basement where he spends many pleasant hours at a woodturning lathe.

Teachers can keep themselves alive and fresh from the stimulation and recreation to be found in any number of things—stamps, etchings, old books, pistol shooting, amateur radio, dogs, photography, leather tooling, or woodcraft. To this list of suggestions I would like to add mineralogy.

Besides the study of minerals, mineralogy involves the hunting and polishing of rocks, and the making of ornaments and jewelry from native rocks.—J. J. BROWN in *The Texas Outlook*.

PROBLEM SOLVING:

Discussion Groups Aim at Action

By

ALICE DAVIS, FLORENCE CLEARY, and ARNOLD MEIER

SCHOOLS ARE concerned with the problems of young people and generally place thinking and problem-solving skills high on their list of objectives. Schools are aware that the skills learned in mathematics and science classes do not seem to transfer sufficiently to life's many diverse problems. Granting these two assumptions, the embarrassing question arises: What is being done in schools today to improve this situation?

To identify certain kinds of individual and school problems, schools in the Citizenship Education Study have used pencil and paper forms, principally problem check lists. This procedure for identifying a range of problems has been described in a previous article.¹ Another procedure for identifying problems is the small discussion group.

In three schools participating in the Study the faculties agreed that children need an opportunity to bring out their problems, to participate in defining these problems, and to share in working toward possible solutions. They began to find opportunities in classrooms and in homeroom and conference periods for children to talk about their real problems. The principal at Barbour Intermediate School, Guy Durgan, arranged for a series of discussion periods. These sessions were an hour in length and were attended by one or two class groups.

The discussion in these groups was led by members of the Citizenship Study staff or by members of the school faculty, who

attempted to create an atmosphere in which problems and questions might be freely raised and discussed. The discussion leaders also attempted to express for the school the belief that through good will and co-operation of pupils and teachers life in the school might be improved for all.

In order to get the maximum participation of boys and girls in identifying the real problems of the school, two questions were used: *What can you do to help your school? How can the school help you?*

The first question seemed to bring out answers of a vague general sort, roughly consistent with the categories of behavior found on report cards. "I should be co-operative." "I should take care of myself since there are a great many students in the school." "I should be prompt." "I should obey the rules."

After these stereotyped answers were listed, some groups proceeded with suggestions which reflected specific, immediate concerns. The suggestions seemed to be motivated by minor irritations or a drive to make life better for the entire group as well as themselves:

"We could make our classroom more attractive."

"We could wash the walls."

"We could scrub the writing off the lavatory walls."

"We could clean and repair the sets of books in our room."

No effort was made by the leader during the discussion period to make plans for carrying these suggestions into action. They were merely listed. In many groups during the next few weeks there was a flurry of activity—walls were washed, books were

¹ Florence Cleary, Alice Davis, and Arnold Meier, "Project in Problem Solving." *THE CLEARING HOUSE*, Oct. 1948, pp. 67-70.

cleaned, and rooms were decorated. As groups planned these action programs, such suggestions as the following were considered: What should be done? What is the best way to do it? Who should do the job? Who should be consulted?

The second question—*How can the school help you?*—also brought out some of the more generalized responses in terms of traditional adult goals for young people: "Help me prepare for a job." "Help me become a better citizen." "Teach me the things I need to know."

As this listing was exhausted, the answers became more specific. They reflected points of irritation or immediate personal concern. From a simple statement of what the school could do to help students, the discussion expanded to include critical remarks about the present situation. Group interest always increased at this stage of the discussion. Such problems as the following were ultimately phrased:

How can we get a grass-covered space on our playfield where we can play football?

How can boys and girls from different rooms get better acquainted?

How can we get more time in the lunchroom?

How can we get more parties and assemblies?

How can we get help when we fall behind in our work?

Can we use the gym after school for games?

How do we get into a club?

How can we stop duty boys from pushing us around?

How can we improve our halls?

The major share of the time in the discussion sessions was spent in working toward the solution of one or two problems. After identifying a problem and agreeing that it was of general concern, the group usually brought up everything that was wrong with the situation. The remarks made were largely negative. The disposition to belabor a situation for four or five minutes after it was identified seemed rather common in all groups and was purposely not "shut off" quickly by the discussion leader. It appeared that "attack"

behavior was an indication of real concern, and a necessary reaction before the next step could be attempted.

When students become critical of a particular school situation, there is an inclination on the part of the leader, because of more complete knowledge, to become defensive and explain reasons. This behavior decreases or extinguishes interest and restricts permissiveness. Accordingly, the leaders tried not to defend the school too much. Rather, they shifted to questions about ways of getting improvement.

This naturally led to many suggestions for tentative solutions, each of which involved obtaining additional information from different individuals and sources. Since it was impossible during the discussion period to pursue the actual step-by-step collection of the needed information, the time was spent in identifying what needed to be known and how and where the information could be obtained. Even in this short period of time, the pupils became aware that it was much more difficult to solve a problem than to gripe about it, that more information than was immediately available was needed to make an in-

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the second of two articles on the problem-solving work of students in schools participating in Detroit's Citizenship Education Study. In "Project in Problem Solving" (THE CLEARING HOUSE, October 1948) the three authors explained the use of a questionnaire checklist to discover pupil problems on which the schools could act. The present article deals with small discussion groups in which students bring up problems and work for their solution. Miss Davis, Mrs. Cleary, and Mr. Meier are members of the staff of the Study.

telligent decision, that a number of individuals and groups with varying functions and degrees of authority had to be involved, and that more than one solution might be possible.

After several experimental trials, it appeared that some of the more important contributions of the discussion leader in such a situation might be summarized as follows:

1. *Separating a cluster of problems into its parts.* When the situation which needed improvement was first described, it was often vague and broad in scope. Frequently it seemed necessary to point out that working toward the solution of a problem is similar to eating a bunch of grapes. The job can be done most efficiently by taking the grapes one at a time.

2. *Indicating needed information.* There seemed to be a rather general disposition to proceed immediately from several tentative solutions to detailing an action program. The groups did not seem to recognize that frequently more information was needed. The leader usually had to assume the responsibility for identifying this need.

3. *Suggesting individuals or groups having a stake in the situation.* The leader found it necessary to suggest repeatedly that there were many people who were affected by proposed solutions and hence should be consulted. The leader pointed out that teachers, parents, community leaders, and other pupils could be helpful because of their knowledge, skill, or experience, and that there were others in positions of responsibility who should be consulted.

4. *Exploring the most feasible points of attack for continued action.* Some problems were referred to the student council; some were referred to administrators, others to teachers, and some were taken back to the homeroom or conference period for further consideration.

One such problem was identified by a group of eighth graders who wanted a

suitable place to play football. The problem was first discussed in a student assembly and several tentative solutions were suggested. The first proposal was to play on the school lawn. The student body generally was dissatisfied with this idea since they feared that playing football would ruin the front lawn, in which they took some pride. A second tentative solution was to use a vacant lot near the school. Investigation revealed that it was too small and that there might be a building erected on the lot very soon.

The group then decided to ask whether there was any objection to covering a clay and gravel section of the large playfield with sufficient top soil to support a growth of grass. This led to many inquiries as to who would have to give approval before action could be taken. Clearance for this proposed solution to the problem was eventually obtained.

The group was then ready to take the next steps toward the solution of the problem, but again they found that more information was needed before the pick and shovel action could begin. Parents, books, catalogs, landscape architects, teachers, and other sources were consulted in order to get the best answer to the following questions: What kind of soil was needed? How much soil was necessary? Where could it be obtained? How much would it cost? How could money be raised? How could the soil be prepared? What kind of grass was desirable? When should the seed be planted? How should the seed be planted? What care was necessary after planting?

To avoid any suspense and to get on with the story, let it be said that the good earth finally produced a respectable turf, and the school had helped students solve a problem. Even more to the point is the fact that the school treated this as an educational experience useful for teaching an important skill—skill in problem solving through the method of intelligence.

Anyone who consciously attempts to

teach thinking discovers rather quickly that the acquiring of necessary skills is a major consideration. Teachers and staff members engaged in this endeavor raised questions concerning procedural steps in problem solving. As a result, a pamphlet of procedural steps was developed by the staff of the Study with the assistance of teachers in the schools.

In general, the outline follows closely other formulations of the scientific method—or method of intelligence—described by Dewey and others: (1) defining the problem, (2) working on the problem, (3) reaching conclusions, and (4) acting on and testing the conclusions. In the first column of the outline, the general steps in problem solving are stated. A second column lists a series of simple questions which attempt to focus attention on the process. A third column lists specific cautions.

This outline has been used by a number of teachers working with boys and girls either in classrooms, in student councils, or in other such groups where skills in problem solving are essential. Two schools have made large posters listing the steps in the process, and these posters now share wall space in the student council room with material on important aspects of parliamentary procedure. Other schools have outlined the procedural steps on film strips which can be used in classrooms.

The need for giving boys and girls skill in problem solving, in critical thinking, in the use of the scientific method has long been recognized by educators. Several attempts have been made to develop materials for use in schools. A notable example is the study financed by the General Education Board and jointly sponsored by Cornell University and the University of Iowa College of Education. Units designed to give students an opportunity to practice skills in critical thinking were developed for the elementary school.

The emphasis in this material was predominantly on problems in subject-matter

areas in which the collection of a set of facts and the acceptance of these facts would solve the problem. There was little emphasis on action problems—"do problems"—which would change conditions in the pupil's immediate environment.

Other attempts to promote critical thinking or problem solving have been made in the area of propaganda analysis. In these efforts, the emphasis has been upon sharpening the student's skill in logical reasoning, in determining wrong inferences, in examining opinions for bias, and in identifying stereotype ways of swaying opinion.

There is considerable research to indicate that the ability to use thinking skills does not transfer readily from one learning situation to another unless there is conscious effort to teach for such transfer. Also from this research has come the principle that the greater the common elements between the learning situation and the situation in which the learning is to be applied, the more useful will the learning be. This would indicate that the skills in problem solving should be taught in situations that are real in the life of the child to insure more permanent learning. To summarize, then, it would appear that one of the best ways to insure the learning of problem-solving skills is to provide educational experiences in which the skills are used in many different situations of real concern and to review, summarize, and eventually generalize the methods and skills into a pattern.

Schools in the Citizenship Study have attempted to give young people many opportunities to work on problems of vital concern to them and to teach the essential skills in problem solving. As these young people grow in their ability to solve their immediate school problems, it seems fair to assume that they will be better able to use this skill in solving their personal problems, the problems of their neighborhood and community.

GUIDANCE: 7 Opportunities

Neglected by Classroom Teachers

By
DOUGALD S. ARBUCKLE

PROBABLY NO GREATER disservice has been done the cause of guidance than that accomplished by guidance "experts" who maintain that guidance in the schools is the sole job of professionals, and that the classroom teacher will merely be an interference in any guidance program. Any such statements relegating the teacher to the background in a school guidance program are idiotic to the highest degree, and may be justly resented by the teachers of this country.

There are, of course, special fields in guidance which only the professional can fill, but even here the teacher should not be entirely ignorant of what goes on:

1. Professional counseling of individuals with deep emotional problems cannot and should not be attempted by the teacher, for there is a distinct possibility that he would make the situation worse instead of better. But every teacher should be trained to detect such individuals, and if he cannot help them he should be aware of some service to which referral might be made. There are today, in the classrooms of schools in the United States, hundreds of potential rapists, thieves, and murderers—and tens of thousands of potentially maladjusted half-effective citizens—going quite unnoticed. If they are noticed, too often their maladjustment is being strengthened, and their future being made even more certain.

2. Not every guidance-minded teacher can administer and interpret the scores of tests that are available. Many a child today carries a brand because of the slovenly administration and interpretation of tests

by some inept teacher. A beautiful example of this sort of thinking was the principal who, impressed with the importance of a certain type of intelligence test, administered it to all the children, scored it, and then placed the results, from high to low, on the main bulletin board. For the rest of their days in that school some children bore the brand "stupid."

The professional training of every teacher should include work in testing and measurement, and every teacher can at least be aware and have some understanding of the many tests that can be used with great advantage in every school.

3. Not every teacher can be expected to have at his finger tips up-to-date vocational information, but he should be aware of current trends in vocations, and make use of sources of referral, if such exist. Too often the community, an excellent source for vocational guidance, is completely ignored.

These are a few of the jobs that the teacher cannot be expected to perform, but any guidance program which is planned on the assumption that the teachers are not to be expected to take part in it is doomed to failure. Those guidance experts—some of whom have never worked in a school system in their lives, and have a most sketchy idea of the job that the teacher actually performs—simply ignore the facts of life when they relegate the classroom teacher to the sidelines. And the most important of these facts is the inability of the vast majority of school systems to afford an entirely specialized guidance program—even if it was desirable. The greater part

of the guidance which will be given in American schools for many years to come will be done, if it is to be done at all, by teachers.

The ideal guidance program will, of course, need the services of the specialists, the semi-professionals (or teacher counselors), and the classroom teachers. This article is concerned with the last of this trio, and although it is desirable that all three be found in every guidance program, teachers should not feel that nothing can be done in the way of guidance unless all three are present.

What, then, do many teachers do that is against the practices and the philosophy of every true personnel worker?

1. Too many teachers think of problem behavior in terms of the annoyance which they feel because of the behavior. A problem arises when the ego or the prestige of the teacher is threatened, and the emphasis is always on the *effect* rather than the cause, and the *teacher* rather than the pupil. The rather noisy boy who may, now and then, toss a 1948 version of a spit ball, get in an odd fight, and occasionally use language that is considered by the teacher to be "dirty," "bad," "crude," or "filthy," may be, in the eyes of the clinician, a pretty well-balanced fellow. On the other hand, the shy, quiet, "sweet little boy" may be definitely maladjusted—in the eyes of the clinician, but not the teacher.

At the same time, however, it must be recognized that it is the teacher who has to deal with the situation of the moment. The clinician may have just cause for complaint, but unless he has actually taught, and been the object of the "effect," he should be careful with his criticism. It is dreadfully easy to tell a teacher exactly what should be done—when the adviser does not have to do it!

2. The few records that teachers do keep are more often than not records of the teacher rather than the child. Records sometimes give a fairly accurate picture of

the personality of the teacher, but about the child they may reveal nothing.

Such statements as "John is rather crude," "Mary is careless and lazy," "Harold is an unusual boy," "Jane is such a sweet little child," and so on, can be immediately condemned to the wastepaper basket. Such "records" reveal nothing whatever about John, Mary, Harold, and Jane. Definitely needed are teachers who can write objective records about the behavior of a child in specific and diverse situations.

3. Teachers tend too often to look outward instead of inward. They give vent to their own class-structured and biased attitudes, and operate under the false assumption that these are the desired goals. It would be well for some teachers to look inward at themselves before they condemn Joe Onyschuk because his language is salted with a few damns and hells—"and anyway, both parents, you know, can hardly speak English—" The signs of a class-structured system of ideals are quite evident in some school systems.

4. Too many teachers work under the false assumption that their job is to teach a subject for the sake of the subject. Blasphemous as it may sound to some, the prime concern of the mathematics teacher is not mathematics, but the individuals to

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mr. Arbuckle steps into the argument on whether guidance is a realm strictly for experts, or a field rich in possibilities for the classroom teachers. He explains a few phases of the guidance program which are best left to the professionals—if the school has any—and twice as many guidance areas in which classroom teachers not only can, but should, play a part. Mr. Arbuckle is director of student personnel in the School of Education, Boston University, Boston, Mass.

whom the mathematics is being taught. The welfare of the individual comes first and mathematics and all other subjects should be taught as an adjustive process.

The hue and cry is immediately raised that students do, after all, have to pass examinations, and the success of many teachers is still measured by this miserable device. This may be true, but it has been shown again and again that when mathematics is taught as an adjustive process the academic grades of the children will be higher than ever before, and yet year after year some teachers, not understanding the child, will beat their heads against a stone wall of resistance.

No individual whose prime concern is the subject should be allowed to be a teacher. Untold damage has been done and is being done to thousands of children by such teachers. The subject, instead of being an instrument of torture, can be a valuable guidance tool—and this should be its major purpose.

5. There are those teachers who never become personally acquainted with any of their students. They know their students as a class or a group, but they never see them as individuals. It is essential that every teacher be concerned with his group as individuals, and in departmentalized schools, where one teacher may teach several hundred pupils, each should be specifically assigned to a much smaller number.

6. Teachers often talk about the school as being "not a preparation for life, but life itself." But how can the school be such an institution if teachers themselves live narrow and restricted lives? This does not mean

that every teacher must periodically become inebriated and have numerous affairs, but it does mean that if he is a teacher of Latin he realizes that the Latin he teaches is a very small segment in the total life of the student—a segment which, if he gets nothing but "pure" Latin, will soon be forgotten. The teacher must be a "whole" person if he is to teach the whole life, but it must be recognized that society does tend to make teachers, especially the female teachers, maladjusted, since it often refuses to allow them to lead a normal life. Many a teacher, however, is merely rationalizing when he blames society, and his adjustment is dependent upon his change of mind, rather than upon environmental manipulation.

7. Too many teachers see no value in the non-academic activities in the school. These activities should not be extracurricular, but should, rather, be a definite part of the educational program. For many students these much scorned activities are the only place where any real learning takes place, and the classroom teacher who takes part in them will be in a better position to provide real guidance. Every teacher should be an active participant in activities that are curricular, but non-academic.

Such, then, are practices which are against the personnel point of view and do not show an understanding of the obligation of every teacher to consider the whole child—his intellect, his emotional make up, his physical condition, his vocational aptitudes and skills, his moral and religious values, his aesthetic appreciations, and his social adjustment.



Try to Find It!

Tracking Pegasus to his lair in the junior high school is a task requiring on the part of the English teacher the industry of the proverbial beaver and the persistent genius of a Sherlock Holmes. No clue should be neglected which may lead to the discovery of creative ability in teen-agers, some of whom seem bent upon concealing it with a devotion worthy of a better cause. This is possibly because they do not expect mere adults to understand their inmost thoughts and feelings.—VIRGINIA PAULINE SPRIGGS in *The English Journal*.

CURRENT MATERIALS:

48 teachers experiment in new uses

By KATHARINE DRESDEN

IN JANUARY 1946, thirty-six teachers in sixteen California high schools undertook a joint study of effective ways for using current materials in the classroom. It was their conviction that social and technical achievements of the past, the great literature, and the recorded history of mankind have little meaning except as they are related to the present. Thus the curriculum of the modern school in all its branches—the language arts and science as well as the social and vocational studies—must find an effective means for integrating formally organized content with the events of today and tomorrow.

The problem is generally accepted as to its purposes. Its urgency is daily increasing along with the increased necessity for understanding and intelligence in dealing with complex local, national, and world problems. Yet the practical difficulties in planning have discouraged many teachers and administrators from a whole-hearted venture into classroom use of newspapers, periodicals, newsreels, radio, recordings, and other media from which the adult draws his information as to what goes on in the world. Questions of practical application must be answered.

Accordingly, the exploratory period of the project, January to June 1946, had as its major purpose not only the education of its members in the wider use of current materials, but a careful evaluation of the actual and potential value of procedures and materials. The exploratory study brought its activities to a close in a four-day workshop with the various consultant personnel. Probably the most significant conclusion from this evaluating session was the decision of the participating

teachers to continue the project. An organization to be known as the California Council on Improvement of Instruction was established to coordinate the activities of the members of the project.

This Council has no officers, no dues, and no membership requirements—except an interest in studying and improving teaching procedures, particularly those relating to the use of current materials. The very informality of this organization has contributed to its vigorous life. After another year of study, the Council published a condensation¹ of its annual report, which has been sent to educators in all parts of the world in response to requests.

The second annual report² contains descriptions of activities in all the classrooms in the project—representing forty-six teachers, teaching almost 6,000 pupils in 186 classes. It runs to 140 mimeographed pages. Any account less comprehensive must suffer from either of two defects—it must be a survey of many classes and hence superficial, or must be limited to only one, and hence neglect the variety and spontaneity of the project classes. It is the purpose of this report to accept the second limitation, and undertake a description of a typical class—that of W. D. Addison, social-studies instructor at the Corona Union High School, Corona, Cal.

It is March 24. The banquet room is crowded and the lull has arrived that comes to all banquets after the waitresses

¹ Lucien Kinney and Reginald Bell, *Better Teaching Through the Use of Current Materials*. Stanford University, 1947.

² *Report of the California Council on Improvement of Instruction* (Mimeographed). Published by the Council, 1948.

have snatched the last plate, the chairs have been pushed back, and the cigars lighted. All look to the speakers' table where the president of the Corona (California) Toastmaster's Club has just introduced the feature of the evening. A patter of applause, and a high-school girl rises from her place, calmly arranges her chair, coolly looks over her audience, and in a firm, clear voice begins the program.

In turn, she calls upon her four classmates, two sophomores and two juniors, three boys and a girl. Each rises and speaks extemporaneously for six minutes on "Aviation in the Modern World," "Our Foreign Policy: Where Is It Leading Us?" "Obstacles to German Peace," and "Should We Outlaw Communism?" These are not memorized orations, they are not read essays, they are not formalized textbook subjects. These are extemporaneous talks, each with a body of content and a message, delivered informally and sincerely by four high-school pupils.

There is no presumption in these youths before adults, but rather the quiet assurance that comes when one knows his subject and has taken a stand, when one is experienced in presenting reasoned accounts of fascinating current developments before a critical audience. Eagerly these youth present their views, and expertly they back them with fact piled upon fact, anticipating the appraisal which is to follow. For they know they are to be rigorously and searchingly judged and evaluated. Judging they do not mind, for first or second place is incidental to them—just an adult concept of something of value. But evaluation interests them, for through evaluation they learn whether they got their message across to their audience, where their strengths and weaknesses lie, where they can improve.

And the audience? Let us take a peek here and there. Remember the audience is composed of adults of the Corona community—men in positions of leadership and responsibility, men who have had some ex-

perience in public speaking, men who are concerned in the promotion of their own businesses and professions and in building a better community—serious, earnest men. But see that twinkle in the gray eyes to the left. Our speaker has tickled this listener's fancy, and the little man is about to burst with pride. Either his child is speaking or his pet idea has been given a public airing. An older man is frowning. He cannot understand school boys who are not roistering in the street at this hour of the night. A distinguished-looking man is flushed—perhaps he is remembering his own limping presentation at a recent group meeting. The tight-lipped curmudgeon in the corner nods his head approvingly. He's all for this new stuff they're doing with kids.

Everywhere there is interest; not an eye wanders from the speakers' table, not a restless movement interrupts the earnest presentation. There is interest, and may we not suppose that there is just a bit of envy of these boys and girls who are doing so magnificent a job and doing it so simply, directly, without affectation or embarrassment? There is interest and envy and questioning.

How do they do it? Are not youth today wild, destructive, undisciplined? Are not our schools permitting freedom and license in the glorification of the individual and the use of democratic controls only? Why were we unable to face an adult audience at fifteen or sixteen years of age and why did we have no interest in world affairs at that age? Surely kids today can't be better than we were!

We, as teachers, want the answers, too, and for them we go to Corona.

Mr. W. D. Addison teaches five classes of 160 sophomores and juniors in world history and United States history. During the first semester, a part of each week was definitely devoted to a discussion of current topics. At first the discussion skipped blithely from subject to subject as new events cropped up in their usual seemingly

disorderly fashion from week to week. But as the weeks passed and the pattern of events began to take shape, reappearing in new dress or with additional developments, order began to come out of chaos. At the end of the semester, as an integrating activity culminating the weekly discussions, the pupils identified about twenty topics which continually reappeared and which were still open for solution.

In the classroom *Time, Life, and Our Times* were available, but reference was also made to other weekly or monthly periodicals, newspapers, books, and radio broadcasts with which the pupils had contact at home and in the school library. A selection was made of the best articles members of the class had found on each of the twenty topics, and this bibliography was mimeographed and distributed to the class.

Now how was it to be used? Mr. Addison uses the A-B-C contract plan in his classes. The pupils were permitted to offer on the A-B contract for the first semester a five-minute extemporaneous talk on one of the twenty topics listed. To qualify, a pupil would draw a topic, start with the basic readings listed on the bibliography, and then, through further reading, develop a bibliography on the topic drawn, preparatory to outlining a talk. To evaluate the finished product, it would be necessary to set up goals to be achieved, or approached, through this experience.

The class, after due deliberation, agreed that achievement at the A-B level required evidence of abilities to: assemble materials (research), evaluate issues of today, organize materials systematically, express ideas in an organized manner, become better informed on the issues of the day. One hundred of the 160 pupils undertook the A-B contract, and as it developed, not more than five or six chose to follow any one topic.

Paralleling this activity and using the same materials and the same time, was a class project to develop chairmen. The chairmanship of the discussion group ro-

EDITOR'S NOTE

For more than two years, a group of teachers in various California high schools have been experimenting in ways of using current materials more effectively and extensively in the classroom. They have organized as the California Council on Improvement of Instruction. Their field of interest includes newspapers, periodicals, newsreels, radio, and recordings. In this article Miss Dresden reports upon a typical good project by a member of the group, W. D. Addison, social-studies instructor at Corona, Cal., Union High School. Miss Dresden is assistant in education at the School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, Cal.

tated from week to week, criteria were set up, and the chairmen were evaluated against these criteria by their classmates.

The culminating activity of the two projects was in the nature of a contest, because of the invitation received from the Toastmaster's Club for representatives of the class to appear before them at one of their March programs. Each pupil wishing A-B contract rating submitted an outline of his talk with a bibliography. Under a series of chairmen, the talks were given before the classes and the twelve best juniors and the twelve best sophomores were selected by their classmates for the next round. In the second series five juniors and five sophomores were selected by the pupils for the semi-finals. The semi-finalists in extemporaneous speaking and in chairmanship were judged by three English and three social-studies teachers in the school. It was at this time that the four finalists and the chairman for the Toastmaster's Club were chosen.

Quite aside from the obvious values of such an experience, important attitudes

were developed both in the classroom and community. First we must mention the values to the pupils themselves. Many of these they had defined in outlining their "Purposes" referred to previously. Other outcomes not anticipated in these purposes are even more important—that is, the assurance that comes to a pupil when he knows that he has a basis of fact for his argument, that he has thought his conclusions through thoroughly, that he is experienced before that most critical of audiences, a high-school class. A vital attitude is that "we" feeling that he has with the community when his business leaders, church leaders, and city officials sit and listen seriously to his views. He develops a feeling that his school is dealing in the realities of life as it is lived beyond the ivory tower.

On the other hand, there is the appreciation developed in the community for the experiences provided by today's schools. A community organization, needing a program, invites the school to furnish it. The classroom, needing a situation to give real-

ity to a lesson, seizes upon the invitation. Now the class has to meet a life-situation, and it presents itself, as a class activity, to the leaders of the community.

To the pupils, the lesson takes on meaning because they see the school in a new light. For the first time they see what we mean by "self-directed activity," by "pupil leadership," by "pupil-teacher planning," by "real-life lessons." They realize that the schoolroom experiences can be meaningful with practical results; they realize that the "little red schoolhouse" concept of education is inadequate and unrealistic; they realize that the young hoodlum brought into Juvenile Court this morning is an exception, rather than the average school boy.

Through such genuine experiences, rather than through argument and appeal, the public comes to realize that the school of today is an institution worthy of its support. Yes, this student participation in community affairs is a value not alone to the school but in the long run to the community as well.



* * THE SPOTLIGHT * *

Excerpts from articles in this issue

Working toward the solution of a problem is similar to eating a bunch of grapes. The job can be done most efficiently by taking the grapes one at a time.—*Davis, Cleary and Meier*, p. 138.

It is dreadfully easy to tell a teacher exactly what should be done—when the adviser does not have to do it!—*Dougald S. Arbuckle*, p. 141.

"Try the human-interest angle, and make it timely." That good advice, so frequently given to journalists who are seeking a new twist to an old story, should be used more often by teachers and administrators. . . .—*Olga Achtenhagen*, p. 147.

The social-science teacher should teach, not the procedures of democratic practice, but the practice of democratic procedures.—*Melvin C. Baker*, p. 152.

So we're trying to work out techniques for getting detailed information on these tensions. Right now,

several of the teachers are having their classes write English compositions on the topic, "It Makes Me Mad!"—*Paul H. Van Ness*, p. 154.

High school, as I remember it, resembled a confused three-ring circus.—*Margaret Boo*, p. 160.

Each year I have an opportunity to take a position in a city school, but each year I refuse the offer. I have many reasons for preferring to teach in a small school. . . .—*M. L. Moore*, p. 162.

The well-disciplined classroom is the result of Fear.—*William Plutte*, p. 165.

If we expect reason of parents, it is we who are unreasonable.—*Alma Hill*, p. 168.

We have "mass educated" our nation at the cost of lowering our religious, moral, and educational standards.—*Jay Ellis Ransom*, p. 170.

"F" is for FOLLOW-UP

Failures in English cut 68%

By OLGA ACHTENHAGEN

TRY THE human-interest angle, and make it timely." That good advice, so frequently given to journalists who are seeking a new twist to an old story, should be used more often by teachers and administrators, for if anything is important in education, it is the human element.

Jim fails in English for the first marking period of his freshman year. His parents, his teacher, and his counselor may or may not take the time to talk with him, but if they do, they will probably concentrate on telling him what he'd better do in the future. Jim fails the second marking period.

By the time the Christmas holidays have come and gone, the third marking period is well on its way, and so is the new year, but Jim hasn't made any good resolutions. For one thing, he's formed a few habits, and they're not very good ones. They may include tardiness, absence, postponing homework preparation, daydreaming, cutting. For another thing, no one has paid much attention to Jim, and he's not had to pay much attention to himself.

When he fails a third time, however, things happen: his parents are sent for, and a solemn conference is held, with Jim in the middle of it, literally and figuratively. All of a sudden there is a great to-do about him. Unfortunately, the alarms and excursions come too late. Jim, in self-defense, withdraws into his adolescent shell, and nothing much gets through to him. In any case, it is too late. It would take a major miracle for Jim to pass the year's work now. And Jim isn't a miracle man; he's just a freshman, and not too sure of himself, whatever he may pretend to his kid sister.

Someone should have taken time in October to talk with Jim. That early in the year he wouldn't have had to pretend that he knew his way around; he would probably have been approachable. Someone should have thought enough of him as a human being to find out about him from those who knew; to talk with him as a person; to be concerned about *why* he wasn't doing his work satisfactorily. That same person should have followed through for the next few weeks, watching his work, checking on his attendance and his achievement, helping him over the hurdles, letting him know that it mattered that he, as a person, did a good job.

There may be deans, counselors, attendance officers, and visiting teachers in a school, but unless the classroom teacher—the person who not only sees Jim every day but who sees his achievement or lack of it every day—starts with Jim as a person and *uses* the guidance department to help Jim, none of the "services" in the school will be of much help to anyone.

Concerned over the waste of time, energy, money, and human personality involved annually in the failure of students to do satisfactory work, the English department of Plainfield, N.J., High School tried an experiment. At the time of the first marking period in October, teachers conferred as usual with the department head about all failing pupils. It was agreed that in the weeks to come all would concentrate on finding the causes of failure, using whatever helps the school could offer in the way of guidance.

Since all felt that time spent that early in the year would be more likely to bring

EDITOR'S NOTE

Only one-third as many students failed in English classes at Plainfield, N.J., High School in the 1947-48 school year as had failed in the preceding school year. In their drive to reduce failures, the school's English teachers began in October to identify students who seemed headed for low marks, and to work with them from then on. This is the story of how the teachers brought failures in their department down below 1 per cent. Miss Achtenhagen is head of the English department in the school.

desirable results than twice the amount of time spent later, teachers gave generously of their help. If they had not already conferred with the pupils who had failed or had received "D" grades, they made a point of doing so at once. And they got in touch with the homes, either by letter or in a conference.

Whenever absence was a contributing factor, they talked with the attendance office personnel. When discipline was involved, they talked with the department head or deans. They compared notes with the counselors. They consulted the tests and measurements office for information about the placement of the pupils, for there are four levels of English in the school. If health problems were involved, they consulted the nurse. They talked with the placement director about boys who were working after school hours, and with the coaches about boys who were spending more time on football than on homework. They used the services of the school to help the pupil.

Early in November the teachers were asked to report progress on the follow-up work they had done with failures and with "D" pupils. They indicated what they had done, what they had learned, and what

progress the pupils had made since the first marking period. The "space for comment" proved all too small for the information that had been gathered.

The little freshman girl who was doing "D—" work came from a broken home; her family had moved three times in two years. She was grateful for the interest her teacher showed in her. It came in time to help. The sophomore boy, inattentive at times, who attended school regularly but didn't seem to learn readily, was "deaf at certain times, depending upon the weather," his sister told us. One boy was helping to run a home for old people in his mother's absence; two weeks after the failure follow-up began he was doing "C" work. The boy whose father agreed to supervise his home study, since the boy was not doing his daily preparation, moved up from a failing grade to a "B," nor did Papa do the work!

Contributing causes of failure ranged from new babies in the household—babies that meant big sister had to do more housework—to the philosophy of a zoot-suit specialist, a self-admitted authority on "Be-Bop" music, who frankly admitted that he didn't "believe in homework." One child was discovered to be frightened of her parents, so frightened that the teacher felt it advisable to work out the problem without benefit of home.

Many of the teachers, sincerely interested in the young people as persons, continued to bring in information about them from time to time, and to count on the continuing cooperation of the home. The following comment is typical: "Jennifer improved immediately after the first follow-up, but she has recently done poor work again. I must call her family this week-end." And the next day, "Jennifer made up her work today, and has promised to come again tomorrow. I still want to talk with her mother, though."

Another teacher reported, "Ever since I gave Ted an electrical job to do at home, his school work has improved." And an-

other, "The three boys I've been working with were amazed when their coach told them he couldn't have them excused for football unless they got busy on the English."

When the second marking period came, just before Christmas, there were 45 failures in a department of 1,800, but only 11 of the 45 had failed *both* marking periods; of the 11, only 4 were freshmen. Again, teachers conferred with the department head on every case of failure or of "D" work, and plans were made for a follow-up on the follow-up.

In February, at the time of the third marking period, there were 60 failures, with absence as the most frequent cause, for the inclement weather during January had taken its toll. Only 10 of the 60, however, had failed for a second time; and only 7 of the 60 had failed for a third time. In other words, all but 17 were headed toward a satisfactory achievement in English for the year; and 10 of the 17 stood an even chance of passing the course. At no time had the record been so good.

At the close of the school year, of the 1,700 children enrolled in our English, speech, and journalism classes, there were only fourteen failures for the year, as against 44 for the previous year. Most of the fourteen were special cases: two were truant during the final examinations, four were serious discipline cases, who passed almost no courses for the year, and three were youngsters whose parents had tried for years (unsuccessfully) to get the youngsters to do satisfactory work.

There are several gains, it seems to me,

in a concentrated program of this sort: first of all, the pupil becomes a person to those who teach him, early enough in the year for the transformation to be of some help to those on both sides of the desk. The boy who failed the first marking period becomes Ned Jones, one of eight children living in a single room. Second, more children are given a satisfactory experience in the classroom; the waste that accompanies failure is reduced, as are the undesirable concomitants of failure. Third, the rich resources of a guidance department are tapped *in time* to be of some value.

Granted, that teachers, good teachers, have always done these things. But teachers are human, too, and the day's work is wearing. We were primarily concerned, in our experiment, with two things: beginning early, and doing a thorough job of learning what there was to know about the cause of *first* failure, so that something could be done about removing the cause—in time.

Someone is thinking, "Why wait until a pupil fails?" Ideally, of course, one shouldn't. But the first few weeks of school are busy weeks. There are from 40 to 50 homeroom children and 150 classroom pupils the teacher must learn to know, to say nothing of 30 to 100 study pupils. If, for most pupils, we can limit the experience of failure in a subject to the first marking period of the year, we shall feel we have improved the situation as it now exists, and that, after all, is the point at which we must begin. In any case, we have learned, from this experience, many things about our children, and no less important, something about ourselves.



Tell the Truth

One thing is sure—if the children we teach leave our schools without ever being told that they live in a world of anarchy and what that implies, if they never hear that a world government is a possibility (and a desirable one), they surely may with justice question the "education" they received.—HOWARD BARNES in *Ohio Schools*.

WHAT *is the* PURPOSE of the SCHOOLS?

By
MELVIN C. BAKER

WHAT IS THE purpose, you ask? If I were a member of the state traffic police I'd say it is to teach the meaning of STOP and which hand to display, even without a flashing diamond.

If a school nurse I'd contend that nothing is more important than to brush your teeth twice a day, see your dentist twice a year.

If a gambler I'd emphasize a football team with propensities for turning an upset when the odds are greatest.

If a committeewoman I'd say the purpose is to keep Junior out of mischief while I attend to my duties and responsibilities.

A garage owner? I'd desire a school that could save me money by turning out a mechanic to my specifications.

A social worker? I'd drill the maxim that Cleanliness is next to Godliness.

Were I a newspaper editor I'd make it clear that the purpose is to teach the names of all the South American countries and not solely the one made famous by *Life's* glamour gal Eva Perone.

As a psychologist I'd demand that the school system serve to get the sheep, goats, wheat, and chaff to the proper marketplace.

If I worked for a government bureau I'd say the purpose is to teach morons to read a form and sign their names in the right places.

If I were a book salesman I'd know the school system exists to provide opportunity for students to fill blanks in workbooks and to assure their honesty by annually furnishing a new set of blanks.

If I were dozens of other things I'd have scores more purposes for the modern school

system, the poor tortured offspring of nationalism and the industrial revolution. For even though Grandpa may have wished to read the Bible he didn't get down to serious booklearning until he had to study a blue-print or vicariously experience his imminent danger by reading a tome on the heathen Chinese.

But to turn from the garrulity to the issue. I am none of these persons, yet agree with nearly all. Quite pleased would I have been to have seen Illinois topple Michigan and quite shocked was I by a recent Gallup inquiry and daily am I exasperated by the stupidity shown by veterans and their employers in their puerile efforts to comply in writing with the clearest instructions.

Many groups and persons have their ideas of the purpose of the school system. Some are quite worthy; a decent rationalization can be made for many. And the obliging leaders of the system have striven hard to take on all comers, especially those equipped to produce the noisiest clamor, but perhaps it is as Confucius or some one may have said, "He who doth profess to please all, pleaseth none." And among those particularly displeased are the school people themselves, judging from the literary outpourings of the elite of the profession. They have long issued warnings of the flood to come, yet we still add another sandbag to the dike instead of planning flood control. We have exchanged the topic of debate from the number of angels on the point of a pin to the number of credits on the point of a football cleat or baton.

Not only are our schools beset by a

multitude of aims, they are groundlooping from the propwash of their competitors. Cognizance is granted by lip service to the important environmental factors provided by the home, church, movies, comics, senatorial investigations, radio, store windows, mail-order catalogues, trade unions, next door neighbors, and maiden Aunt Catherine. Yet the school too often blithely assumes that it is the sole agency for guiding the growth of the individual.

Back in my day, I remember, not Mamma, but Samuel Insull and the admonitions I received to apply myself at—I believe it was eight dollars a day in that deflated era—and I would possibly be another Insull. It so happened that I grew up in a town rich in Lincoln lore, and perhaps one of the less obvious reasons I am not a millionaire is that Abe licked Sam after school.

Reflection on the meaning of the countless aims proffered to the school system and observation of the universal concern over the power of outside influences suggests that it is the actions of our graduates that worry us. The fact that they lack a bit of information at the wrong time causes only a ripple of comment. Whether they are imbued with worthy ideals and principles shows only when they act.

What a man really has been taught is apparent only in his conduct.

What does Johnny do when the teacher's back is turned or his boss steps out for a minute? What does he do with his pay check? What does he do on election day and the day before? What does he do about those beckoning brown eyes? What does he do when Junior smashes the window pane? What does he do when he gets a traffic ticket? What does he do while awaiting his wife? What does he do when the doctor solemnly shakes his head? What does he do in any situation?

Responsibility for what he does is usually placed upon—and quite seriously accepted by—the school system.

The harassed teacher is confronted everywhere by his apparent failures:

He drives his car to town on Saturday morning and barely escapes collision with some demon of the road, a stomach-revolving reminder that he must get started on that safety program.

He waits his turn in the barber shop and overhears the man under the lather complain that his nephew can't spell asafetida or pneumonia; he twinges with the doubt that maybe the fundamentals are being neglected.

He ducks behind a last year's picture magazine and stares at a picture of a youthful rapist and his beautiful victim; he really ought to get up enough courage to start sex education.

He shyly passes the local tavern for his morning relaxation in the drug store haven. He notices the star halfback in the corner intent with a comic book; surely he must give more attention to culture.

He sees an attractive display of cut-rate merchandise. As he leaves with a package under his arm, calculating the remains of his salary, he is convinced that consumer education can no longer be omitted.

He gets in line to buy a theater ticket. When the twentieth person crowds in line

EDITOR'S NOTE

The schools apparently are all things to all people. To Mr. Baker they are important as a place where the future actions of their students are influenced: "What a man really has been taught is apparent only in his conduct." He offers many specific instances to show what he means. Mr. Baker is supervisor of education and training in a sub-regional office of the Veterans Administration, and works with fifty-five high schools in Southeastern Illinois. His address is 1000 South 21th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

up ahead he vows he'll stop those kids pushing around the lockers in the hall.

The news reel unfolds the memorial to the birth of the atomic bomb; time is wasting and he must get the kids ready for the atomic age, whatever that is.

The feature film ends after slight resemblance to the book he so religiously read. What a wasted miracle—what could have been done with it!

The evening paper states that the local juke box tycoon is spending the winter in Florida; perhaps he wasn't meant to be a teacher anyway.

I would suggest to this busy, conscientious teacher that he is pursuing the right scent. For the purpose of the school system is to help the individual to act in ways that are best for him and for the community. But perhaps the trail is being followed in the wrong direction.

I would remind him that neither he nor a fond parent can provide the youth with ready-made solutions to all of life's varied activities; he can't condition his approaches and responses to every conceivable situation. Neither can the school system achieve all aims or defeat every competitor by direct frontal assault on each in turn. Time will not permit this; our beliefs change; life's activities and problems alter; we cannot foresee each individual's needs; the individual makes his own choice of actions.

But the school can and should help this boy (or girl) to act in ways that are best for him by releasing him to the freer activities of manhood with such a feeling of need for

greater understanding of his acts that he will never cease the search. If we can't provide for every contingency let's provision the boy with determination to meet the contingency with the best tools that mankind has devised.

The math teacher should remember that a student's inability to solve quadratic equations is not so disastrous as his failure to comprehend the usefulness of mathematical exactness.

The physics teacher shouldn't worry so much if a student can't repeat Boyle's Law on an exam paper. The boy who learns to use the method by which science has given us our best understanding of the right ways of life will readily learn and use the Law when he needs it.

The social-science teacher should teach, not the procedures of democratic practice, but the practice of democratic procedures. The autocrat of the curriculum committee no doubt follows parliamentary rules.

Let the teacher of any subject, now floundering in a hopeless effort to teach everything expected of him, achieve his purpose by concentrating on the one aim of teaching the individual to aspire to know why he acts as he does and to desire the best knowledge available to mankind for his guide.

My young son asks me why I wear neckties. I hope some teacher can explain it to him better than I, and in such a manner that he will continue to seek a better understanding of his acts and the courage to govern himself accordingly.



At Every Opportunity

Teach toward world-mindedness deliberately, pervasively, and whenever the opportunity arises. Last week a practice teacher from our school made an ancient-history class . . . come alive. They were discussing how Greek city-states lost their existence because they would not band together. This led the pupils into a consideration of a similar prob-

lem that was faced by our early colonies along the Atlantic seaboard, problems existing within the city where the high school was located, and world problems of today. At least a half dozen times during the period the students in this ancient-history class discussed modern parallels of ancient problems.—W. L. CHASE in *Social Education*.

GROPING

Newark school studies children's problems to plan helpful program

among pupil TENSIONS

By

PAUL H. VAN NESS

WHAT ARE SOME of the tensions tugging at the growing personality of the youngster who lives in a typical crowded, economically underprivileged, industrial city area? How do these tensions affect his development? What should—and can—the school do about them? These are some of the questions to which the faculty members of the Central Avenue School, in common with other educators the country over, are trying to find the answers.

An organized quest for these answers has been going on at Central Avenue for some years now. The search has included community surveys and curriculum study. It has included experimentation with the sociogram and the sociodrama, with case studies and anecdotal records. Many members of the faculty have taken special courses in sociology, psychology, and human relations to further the study.

The program, which by now is a rather highly organized one, involves and is directed by all members of the faculty, operating both as individuals and through a coordinating committee. Its sole *raison d'être* is to discover means whereby the school can help its youngsters to live richer, more meaningful, and more socially valuable and satisfying lives than might otherwise be the case.

For the past year and a half, the school has been aided in this work through its participation in the American Council on Education's project, Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools. Through this source, our faculty has gained the services of trained consultants in the field of human relations. In its turn, the Council has had the use of

all materials developed in the school. To date, it has been a mutually satisfying relationship.

So much for background. What, specifically, are we actually doing? Well, this year we are concentrating on two particular tasks. The first of these is to examine in some detail some of the stresses and tensions operating in our neighborhood. The second is to experiment with ways in which we can either reduce these tensions, or make the youngsters who live under them more able to take them in their stride and to react to them in a constructive manner. This appears to be an educational job of the highest order, but it's certainly one very few of us know too much about. Frankly, we admit that we are groping.

Take the first part of the order—the examination of the tensions in the area. At first glance, they appear very obvious. Further examination seems to show that they're a lot more complex than they appear on the surface. For example, there is poverty. Certainly we can count the telephones or the bedrooms or the flush toilets in the community, divide by the population, and show that we're in an economically underprivileged area. However, poverty in itself doesn't seem to make for bad adjustment. Some of our best adjusted people come from poverty-stricken homes. On the other hand, some folks can work themselves into neuroses because they have only mink coats while some of their friends have sables. What is it that enables some people to meet poverty without undue stress, while others crack under the strain?

Then there's the tension growing out of

EDITOR'S NOTE

Teachers of the Central Avenue School in Newark, N.J., are making a study of the neighborhood to discover sources of tension that affect the personalities of their pupils. The project is backed by the American Council on Education. Findings of the study will be used in developing a school program that should help pupils to make a better adjustment to the stresses of an underprivileged neighborhood. We hope the experiment is so successful that we can publish a later article on what the school has done to cope with the situations it discovers. Dr. Van Ness is principal of the school.

race. Our youngsters are split about fifty-fifty between the white and Negro races. Are there tensions growing out of this? They aren't very apparent on the surface. We have far more fights between white and white, or between colored and colored, than we do between white and colored. Our youngsters may call one another some pretty unsavory names, but they're never the color names.

Does this mean that, as we may fondly say, kids aren't conscious of color? It may; but some of us think more likely it means that they've grown up in this neighborhood, and that they've learned since they were knee high that if they used the color names, they'd get their blankety-blank blocks knocked off. Most of us feel that even if it doesn't show on the surface, there's plenty of tension arising out of color in such an area as ours.

It seems reasonable to believe that when we teach youngsters about equality of opportunity, and then they hear their parents talk about the difficulty of getting jobs, about how restricted they are as to places to even look for homes, about the way their

older brother was pushed around when he took his basic training in the South, it would be pretty hard to prevent the growth of tension on the part of the Negroes. Similarly, when the old white families of the neighborhood find that they can't sell their houses except at a terrific loss, when they, with very strong prejudices, find their children growing up with colored youngsters, they can't help but develop tensions.

Color, economic conditions—these are only two of a large number of possible sources of tension in our area. What can we in the school do about them? As I have already suggested, the first thing seems to be to examine them in detail. This is less simple than it seems. It can't often be done directly. If you ask people, they probably won't understand. Or, if they do, they probably don't know the answers in any but the most general terms. And they're likely to clam up and not tell you what they do know. They feel it's none of your business.

So we're trying to work out techniques for getting detailed information on these tensions. Right now, several of the teachers are having their classes write English compositions on the topic, "It Makes Me Mad!" The youngsters are encouraged to think of the last time that they got thoroughly mad, and then to write about it as fully as possible. Then, with the aid of the consultants from the Council, we will analyze these compositions to see what specific suggestions they contain.

Which make them mad more often—people or things? What situations appear more frequently—home, or school, or street? Who are the people most commonly causing the madness—strangers or companions, parents, brothers and sisters, teachers?

Will helpful data emerge? We don't know yet. We may not get anything out of these compositions. On the other hand, we may.

If they do reveal some specific tensions common enough to be worthy of consideration, our next step is to try to figure out

what to do about them. Things are most likely to make us mad when we don't know how to handle them. So, if we can find the situations and relationships that make the youngsters maddest most often, we've isolated the situations that they don't know how to handle. Then it's up to us to figure out how to teach them the way to handle those situations and relationships constructively. That is the second part of the program. Since we've barely made a start on the first part, it would be pretty hard to say how the second part is coming out.

Another of the things we're doing to get a lead on some of the specific tensions of the neighborhood is to talk with people living and working here, more or less informally, and then to jot down their comments as nearly verbatim as possible as soon afterwards as we can.

For instance, when we drop into the candy store for a pack of cigarettes, the owner blows his top about conditions

around his store. Normally, we'd just walk out with the general idea that he thinks the neighborhood has run down since he opened shop fifteen or twenty years ago. But by jotting down as nearly as possible exactly what he said, then analyzing the whole conversation with the help of the consultants, we hope we may find some of the specific ways in which it has run down, and that some of them may be things about which we can do something in school. Will it work? We don't know. We think it's worth a try.

That's about the story of what we're trying to do this year: experiment with techniques for examining neighborhood tensions in detail, then see if we can shape our curriculum to either ease these strains, or to teach our youngsters to handle them more constructively. We don't know how successful we'll be. We do think that, win, lose or draw, we're all learning something from the process.



* * *

FINDINGS

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PAMPHLETS: Analysis of 36 pamphlets on international affairs, issued by 9 different organizations, shows that their reading difficulty makes them of little value for use with average high-school students, reports Sig N. Guckenheimer in *Educational Research Bulletin*. Some 75% of the pamphlets had a reading difficulty at or above college level; 14% at senior-high-school level; and only 11% at the high-school freshman level (grade 9). Among the organizations whose pamphlets were predominantly

beyond the reading ability of 12th-grade students were: U. S. Department of State, Foreign Policy Association, United Nations, UN Department of Public Information, and American Association for the United Nations. Where the needs of high-school students are concerned, only the pamphlets of the Public Affairs Committee made a good showing. Of the 3 Public Affairs Pamphlets included in the study, 2 could be read by the average 9th- or 10th-grade pupil.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Good, bad, indifferent or important, there is a great amount of counting studies and other research going on in the field of education. We think readers will be interested in brief, unqualified summaries of some main points in some of the findings. Lack of space prohibits much explanation of methods used, degree of accuracy or conclusiveness, and sometimes even the scope of the study.

ATHLETIC AWARDS: Numerous high schools are extremely extravagant in the awards which they give to their athletes, says Kenneth G. Sullivan in *Massachusetts Teacher*. But in 2 states (Nebraska and Wisconsin) high-school athletes are not permitted to accept from anyone any article of "utilitarian value"; in 3 states (Kansas, Ohio, and Illinois) a limit of one dollar in value is set upon athletic awards; and in 6 states (Iowa, Michigan, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and West Virginia) sweaters may not be awarded.

WORD CONCEPTS:

Economics Class Polls Community

By

JOSEPH L. MCKINNEY and AVERY F. OLNEY

SOME WORDS PRODUCE a strongly emotionalized reaction on the part of the hearer. This well-established and often observed fact, like some germs, seems not to have been "isolated" by many students and adults. They are prone to believe that such words as *strike*, *democracy*, *duty* always mean the same things; that is, what the hearer means by the word. Many an argument, and for that matter, many a formal debate could be brought to an abrupt close by requiring both sides to define clearly the key word or words under discussion.

In searching about for some approach to the problem of bringing home to high-school students the idea that many words used glibly in discussions of social and economic problems do not convey meaning because the concepts of the speaker and of the listener are not similar enough to cause a "meeting of minds," we decided to ask students to make a study of a few controversial words in the field of labor-management relations.

Therefore during the second term of the 1947-48 school year the students in one of the classes in economics at North Phoenix High School undertook a small project to discover for themselves what differing viewpoints existed in the minds of the adults of the community as to the meaning of certain key-words in labor-management relations.

Purpose: To provide opportunity for students to learn that there is wide variation in people's understanding of the meaning of certain controversial words; and to provide an opportunity for the student

to learn the necessity of defining his concept of a controversial word before expecting others to understand his meaning.

Procedure: In order to keep the class from undertaking too large a project, it was thought best to limit the study to three words. The words were chosen from the discussion of labor-management relations in the text used by the class. The intention was to select words which would be familiar to most citizens and on which there was certain to be a difference of opinion. The words selected were *union*, *strike*, and the phrase *closed shop*.

The students in the class were divided into three groups, each group to be responsible for processing one word. Students were permitted freedom of selection if they had any particular desire to choose one word, otherwise they were assigned by lot. Each student tried to obtain five definitions of the word from adults outside his own family circle, using the suggested answer card.¹

Each group then undertook to secure definitions of its word from authorities on the subject—that is, textbooks on economics or labor-management relations or articles written on economic subjects. This phase of the project was carried on by student committees working in the North Phoenix High School library with the full cooperation of the librarians.²

¹ The definition card contained the word to be defined, space for the definition, and a place to indicate the sex and occupation of the person defining the word.

² A card containing a place for the definition, author, title, publisher, date of publication, and page number on which the definition occurred was used.

Each group processed the definitions and made a report to the class of its findings. The student summaries follow:

REPORT ON THE WORD "UNION"

Classification of the definitions received:

1. An organization which protects laborers from capitalistic domination.
2. A large organization of working men.
3. A group of people organized to get higher wages and to set working hours.
4. A group of organized workers who agree to work under certain conditions and follow certain laws.
5. An organization to uphold the interests of the working class, to secure the highest wages possible, and to protect its positions.
6. An organization of men who banded together to protect their rights as a whole.
7. A union is the banding together of a group of employees in a consolidated front against the supposedly unfair practices and injustices of and by an employer.
8. Union means collective bargaining, job security, steady wage increases to equal the cost of living, and pensions for old age.
9. A group of people of the same trade banded together to help further their cause of better wages, working conditions, and that each may have recognition in any matters pertaining to their work.
10. Federations of individuals which originally were formed for the purpose of bettering the working conditions of the working man, but through the advent of some leaders they have deteriorated to selfish organizations which aim to exclude many for the gain of those in the group or to create class friction, with some apparently having the underlying motive of changing our system of government.
11. The union protects the working man during working hours and working conditions and also sees that the person gets his or her quarterly raises until the elapsement of the period of the particular trade.

12. When different parts of something are united they are a union.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

The only conclusion that can be reached from these various and far-reaching definitions is by the comparison of their definitions with their occupations, which indicate their station in life. It all comes down to this. It depends upon a person's doctrines, background, and education. We may even go so far as to say it depends upon a person's broadmindedness.

The only way a common over-all definition can be acquired by the people is by education through unbiased radio newscasts, presenting both sides in newspaper articles, and the like.

Of the 28 definitions processed there were 12 different definitions, showing that most of them didn't look at it the same way. Breaking our report down still further we find that no one seems to have given a good, clear, unprejudiced definition. Out of our list of 12 definitions one seems to have a reasonably good idea of what a union is. Five seem to know only part of the story, but what they do know is correct. Another five are either misinformed or prejudiced. The last definition misses the point entirely.

The rather decided differences of opinion aided this committee in formulating a

EDITOR'S NOTE

The words were "union," "strike," and "closed shop." Students in an economics class of North Phoenix High School, Phoenix, Ariz., chose them for a semantic investigation in the community. They wanted to see for themselves what differing viewpoints existed in the minds of local adults on the meaning of these glibly-used, everyday words. The varying definitions obtained by the students, and their conclusions about what they had learned, are reported in this article. Mr. McKinney is chairman of the social-studies department of the school, and Mr. Olney is reading consultant of the Phoenix Union High Schools, and an associate editor of THE CLEARING HOUSE.

somewhat more thorough report than those of the other two committees. Few comments need be made, since the report indicates pretty well that the students found out that there was definite bias pro and con on the matter of union organizations and their accomplishments. The reader may well wish that the committee had identified the five definitions which "knew only part of the story" and the five whose authors were either "misinformed or prejudiced."

REPORT ON THE TERM "CLOSED SHOP"

Classification of definitions received:

1. A business establishment which employs only union members. (All but 5 definition cards had this meaning in some form.)
2. A shop closed by the union because of strike.
3. I don't know. (One card stated this fact, although three people didn't know but didn't say so.)
4. A shop that is bankrupt.
5. A communistic plan to defeat democracy and its principles.
6. A plan by which labor seeks to control capitalism.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

There were eighteen different definitions of a *closed shop* submitted. Of these there were twelve definitions that were very similar and agreed with the definitions of the experts in almost every way.⁹

⁹The pupils submitted seven definitions from authority, all of which contained substantially the same idea, with more or less descriptive amplification. Most of the definitions did not distinguish sharply between the terms *closed shop* and *union shop*. These authorities were cited:

Joseph Arnold, *Challenge to American Youth*. Row, Peterson, 1940, p. 323.

Joseph Arnold and Dorothy Banks, *Building Our Life Together*. Row, Peterson, 1939, p. 172.

Howard Hill and Rexford Guy Tugwell, *Our Economic Society and Its Problems*. Harcourt, Brace, 1934, p. 548.

Leo Huberman, *The Truth About Unions*. Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941, p. 16.

Julia E. Johnson, *The Closed Shop*. H. W. Wilson Co. (A compilation.)

S. Howard Patterson, A. W. S. Little, and Henry

There were five definitions that did not agree with the others or with the authorities. The others had no definition.

We, therefore, conclude that the majority of the people whom we have interviewed agree, with few exceptions, to the definition of the experts.

It seems clear that there was not the difference of opinion found in the definitions of *closed shop* which existed in the definitions of the other terms in the labor-management area. That some adults still do not know what a closed shop is is very evident from some of the definitions received. The student comment on the "I don't know" group is discerning as well as amusing.

REPORT ON THE WORD "STRIKE"

Classification of definitions received:

1. A strike exists when a group of people make a decision whereby the operations necessary for daily existence or comforts of civilized modes of living conditions are curtailed. (housewife)
2. Unsatisfactory working conditions; dissatisfied with compensation; due to top labor-management mostly; ignorance to a great degree of rank and file as to financial conditions and profits of employer; agitation by labor organizers and top brass.
3. A strike is the walking out of workers against their employers. Strikes are a legal thing and are governed by certain laws. Men striking do not quit their jobs; they only stop temporarily.
4. A strike is a forceful way of getting more money when negotiations can't be reached any other way. Strikes are now very common and many times effective.
5. A strike is usually called when a group of employees become dissatisfied with their working conditions and refuse to work until their demands are met.

R. Burch, *Problems in American Democracy*. Macmillan, 1940, p. 311.

Joel Seidman, *Union Rights and Union Duties*. Harcourt, Brace, 1943, p. 44.

Page references are to the page on which the definition was found.

6. A strike is used as a last resort to settle disputes between employers and employees.

7. Cessation of work by employees usually involving picketing to prevent others from working, in order to obtain benefits from their employers to which said employer will not agree otherwise.

Definition Selected as Representative of Authority⁴

A strike is a stoppage of work by all or part of the employees in order to force employers to meet certain demands and to help obtain a steady job, get adequate real wages, have a good foreman, have individual and collective voice about conditions, and a chance to rise.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS

We have reached the conclusion that the general run of people agree vaguely with the authorities. Out of the 24 definitions received there were seven general definitions chosen. Only three of the seven (3, 5, and 7) agree with the authoritative definition chosen, while the others seem to have only a hazy idea of what a strike is.

This committee report is subject to some criticism in that the students failed to note, or at least to point out, that certain of the definitions do not necessarily show a lack of knowledge of what a strike is, but rather tend to show bias. The first definition

⁴This definition appears to be a combination of two definitions taken from different authorities: (1) Joseph Arnold and Dorothy Banks, *Building Our Life Together*, Row, Peterson, 1939, p. 174. (2) Eugene Hilton, *Problems and Values of Today*, Little, Brown, 1940, p. 421.

quoted in the committee's report shows a housewife's reaction to the disturbances caused by strikes in her daily life. More questioning of this housewife would have to be undertaken before one could reach the conclusion that she did not know what a strike is or why it is caused. (A butchers' strike or lock-out was in progress in Phoenix at the time these definitions were secured. It is possible that difficulty in supplying her family with meat may have prompted the reply received from this housewife.)

The comments grouped under number 2 by the student committee are not definitions but rather an attempt to explain why strikes take place. Here also one cannot be sure that the citizens did not know what a strike is; they were concerned with the causes of strikes.

CONCLUSIONS

From the data in the reports it seems safe to conclude that the students became aware of these facts:

1. People in general have widely varying ideas of the meaning of such terms as *strike*, *union*, and *closed shop*.
2. One's background of experience seems largely responsible for these differences of concept.
3. A careful definition of any controversial word is essential if one is to convey meaning accurately.
4. Education in understanding both the meaning of words and of social concepts is needed by the young citizens of the community.



Auditory-Oral Method

There was one outstanding achievement in the Army educational program. Short courses in language produced linguists for every battle area, and many of these boys are still functioning satisfactorily in occupation areas. Phonographic records and practice in the simple elements of a language is the explanation of this modern miracle of speak-

ing in many tongues. It was an auditory-oral method of approach and it produced to meet the nation's wartime needs. . . .

Translation at best is an end product. The written language can be delayed almost indefinitely, and spelling will ultimately be derived from use.—LEON C. STAPLES in *Connecticut Teacher*.

All Play in High School— TROUBLE *in* COLLEGE

By MARGARET BOO

SURE, HIGH SCHOOL was fun, but today, after a year of college, the strains of our high-school "rouser" sound a little off key to me. I have discovered, the hard way, that it takes more than memories of fun to earn a college degree. Although I was graduated from high school with a fairly high scholastic standing, I could not adjust myself to college routine or do better than average work in college classrooms.

At first I blamed the college; all of us did. "They lay the work on too thick," we said, or "We need more free time," or, most frequently, "High school was never like this." But the day I began to look back over high school with a critical, rather than a nostalgic eye, I realized that I had been graduated with only a smattering of impractical knowledge, almost no experience of discipline, and absolutely no idea, at all, of how to study. And now I want to know whose fault it is that so many of us entered college, and the business world, too, emotionally and academically immature.

High school, as I remember it, resembled a confused three-ring circus; the faculty and the administration chased each other around a never-ending circle, while we students sat contentedly on the sidelines, enjoying the show and occasionally cracking the whip. Little wonder that we lost valuable time learning that in college students do not run either the classes or the teachers.

Both democracy and amateur psychology can be carried to unwise extremes, and in our school they were. To a large extent we studied and behaved as we pleased, and when we overstepped the vaguely defined boundaries of discipline, we found it easy

to talk or laugh our way out of trouble. It seems more than one year ago that we went on strike for some petty reason, and when we insisted that we were only following the democratic practices we had been taught, the administration conceded to our highly unreasonable demands.

I remember laughing with a "problem child," a few weeks later, over his account of striking a teacher and "getting away with it." The same administration gave the teacher its familiar kids-will-be-kids wink, and released the boy with an admonition to behave in the future. He did not; a year later he was in jail. He forgot that he was out of high school, and could not "get away with it" any more.

All of us went through the same experience, to a lesser degree, and I know now that the shift to college restrictions would have been much less of a jolt if we had known well-enforced rules four years earlier.

Many of us sat in our college classrooms painstakingly "relearning" textbook material that had been either superficially presented or completely ignored in high

EDITOR'S NOTE

After a year in college, and with a year's perspective on high school, Miss Boo has a bitter complaint to make. She charges that her high school "resembled a three-ring circus"—that it gave her "almost no experience of discipline" and never required her to learn how to study. She is a college student in Minnesota.

school. Dickens was canceled out of our senior literature section in deference to a football game, and we skimmed the chapter on electricity in physics because the band members left early each day to practice for the all-important spring concert. Although the class schedule provided an hour a day for extracurricular activities, it seemed that, too often, an hour was hardly enough time.

Who was to blame? The faculty? They were only following the orders of the administration. The administration? But the administration protested that the townspeople expected their high school to excel in sports, and drama, and music. The townspeople, then? No, the townspeople complained that "the high-school kids spend more time out of school than in." And "the high-school kids" watched the merry chase, and complacently told one another that "extracurricular activities are the things you remember when you have graduated." Now I can see how right we were; those are the things I remember, but I would gladly trade most of my memories for a little of the knowledge I missed.

If I could have begun learning the day I entered college, my four years of high school might not have been such a complete loss—but I could not. High-school training had disregarded even the fundamentals, and I did not know how to study. Countless nights this past year I sat with my French book open before me and remembered regretfully all the hours I had bluffed my way through high-school Latin, promising myself that I would really study it "tomorrow." But "tomorrow" was always the

"deadline" for the school paper, or the day of the big track meet, and knowing that I could get by in Latin class, I never did get around to learning the language.

It was common knowledge that our social-studies teacher did not expect much class recitation, so that textbook lay neglected until the night before a test. Another of our teachers regularly distributed mimeographed lists of questions, and then, the following day, called on us alphabetically for the answers; needless to say, each student bothered to learn the answer to only one question.

Ethics was unknown to us, and since most of the faculty members obviously expected us to cheat at every opportunity, we were quick to oblige. More than once we obtained "black market" copies of tests, and consequently passed with flying colors. I think most of us are not proud now of some of the methods we employed to get high grades, but then, as far as we could see, school was a sort of battleground where students were pitted against their teachers, and we based our tactics on "All's fair in love and war." On one occasion an instructor actually gave us the answers to a state examination, in order to maintain the standing of the class. More than likely, she was graduated from a high school like ours.

To step from kindergarten to college, from a make-believe world to real life, is an impossible feat. Is it any wonder that we are confused in our classrooms and in our jobs today as to how to apply the knowledge and standards of conduct we learned in four years of high school?



Cooperative English

Since "English" is like "Health"—it permeates every other field of living—the English teacher has an extra-classroom responsibility as well as an intra-classroom responsibility. . . .

English classes can help a student prepare a bibliography for science reading, or show him how to find books appropriate to his ability in the period

of history he is studying. A formal organization of the curriculum for the purpose of making English functional throughout the school may be developed. The success of this method depends upon the degree of democracy in the school and the ability of the teachers.—VIRGINIA B. LOWERS in *Los Angeles School Journal*.

I'm Glad I'm a SMALL-TOWN Teacher

By
M. L. MOORE

EVERY FALL when I resume teaching English in a small-town high school my friends ask me, "Why on earth do you stay teaching in a small town? Why don't you get into a big-city school?"

Believe me, it is more difficult trying to convince my friends that I like being a small-town teacher than it is trying to fill the reluctant minds of young America with the intricacies of grammar. The moment I argue that I am glad to be a small-town teacher I am accused of being lazy, of being satisfied with ambitionless mediocrity, of lying in a comfortable and cozy rut. Well, that may be.

Each year I have an opportunity to take a position in a city school, but each year I refuse the offer. I have many reasons for preferring to teach in a small school, but my principal one springs from my professional philosophy. Although I have forgotten many ideas well-meaning instructors gave me at college, I remember one: A teacher teaches pupils, not subject matter.

In a small high school she can teach boys and girls with the most satisfying results. She knows her pupils, their ambitions, their homes, their after-school life, their friends, their problems, because she has the time and she takes the time to know them. And knowing all these things, she directs her teaching along the proper and most effective channel. It is impossible for the teacher in a big city school to insert the personal element on a wide basis into her teaching. Of course, a few youngsters will capture her fancy, her attention, but the majority will pass unnoticed.

With more than 200 students visiting

her room daily, Miss City Teacher knows scarcely more than those who sit in her homeroom. To her the pupil is little more than a name in a rank book, or that smart Barton girl, or that evilish Ames boy. Teaching with her is based upon the principle of mass production. The bright ones will get the subject matter from personal reading and class instruction; the slower ones (and in English grammar this group always seems greater), like the Biblical seed, fall onto the rock by the way side. This can't be helped. A school day is just so long. Teachers can't work too many miracles even though parents and school executives would have you think they could. Teaching to be good has to be done on a small scale.

By personal interest I don't mean idle curiosity or malicious inquisitiveness. I mean knowing the youngsters so that the teacher can be their confidante, so that she can give a purpose to their lives, so that she can open doors of new ideas to them, so that eventually they will be sincerely concerned with the welfare of their classmates, their fellow citizens. The joy, the intense satisfaction that come from knowing youngsters, liking them, and then helping them is indescribable.

In a small community the pupils' attitude towards their teacher is different from the feeling the city crowd have for their instructors. It's the human element the country pupils have that can't be found in the large community. The town teen-agers look upon their teacher as a real human being rather than as a "textbook wired for sound," for they have seen her at the movies, at football games, or at school

proms with her boy friend. They know she is not simply a public figure with constant emphasis upon "she can skate or ski, perhaps star in the town dramatic group's play. They know she can do more than lead them for homework or scold them for deviltry, for after sessions have not the "kids" relaxed with her at the teen-agers' canteen? With small-town pupils, the teacher is a friend. Incredible though it may sound, this relationship makes for happier teaching and hence easier teaching.

Teaching in a small town gives a person a chance to loaf. She doesn't have to work as hard as her twin teaching in the big city because there is no complicating system. There are no supervisors and department heads smothering a small-town teacher with almost unbearable pressure in the form of achievement tests, reports, charts, and other professional chit-chat designed to make the supervisor and department head shine rather than the teacher. And having time to loaf, the pedagogue in the little municipality has time to live. At the end of the school day she is not exhausted; she is alert and eager to meet life at other places—places like the golf range, the ski track, the tennis court, the sewing school, the library, the museum. She has time to relax, to think of something else besides school teaching.

It's easy to spot the teachers whose entire life centers around teaching. They have looks of tiredness, weariness, and anxiety. Their bodies reflect their inner turmoil. It's not so with the small-town teacher who gets away from the academic atmosphere and forgets it. No matter how well or how poorly she fares in those outside activities, she has some fun and no ulcers. And the teacher who has fun is the good teacher.

A small-town teacher meets and knows people outside her own field. The only outsiders her city colleague meets are disgruntled parents or book salesmen (and

usually the department heads bag these visitors). The chances are that the small-town instructor will join a club or two besides her teachers' alliance. In these clubs she finds people with different occupations, different interests, different personalities. She learns to know these people by name; she is invited to their homes, their parties. Her big-city sister is probably entertaining at a bridge game the girls whose rooms border hers at Mammoth High. In the little community the teacher knows almost everyone from the librarian to the postal clerk. Her urban counterpart scarcely knows the janitor in her own building. The small-town teacher is a somebody. She enjoys a certain amount of prestige in the community; whereas her city associate is lost in the mob of uncaring citizens.

Undoubtedly, it is the money angle that sends small-town teachers racing to the larger cities. The whole amount of the year's salary probably looks very alluring, but divided among higher board, more expensive clothes, and greater amusement prices a city teacher's salary dwindles faster than that of her country colleague.

How often you hear that small-town teachers have no life of their own. Personal life is supposedly governed by a long list of taboos. The teacher must not smoke. She must not swear. She must not drink. She must not wear finger-nail polish. She must not wear cosmetics. In short, she must look like a horror, and act like a prude. I have

EDITOR'S NOTE

Of Bridgewater, Mass., where Miss Moore teaches, the Guide to America says: "pop. 8,902, alt. 62 ft. Manufacturing town and seat of a State Teachers College." In this article she gives a more subjective account of the town, and explains why she prefers to teach there rather than in a larger city. She teaches in the junior high school.

heard about these blue laws, but I have never encountered them in my small-town teaching. If these restrictions exist, they exist in the small minds of school executives presiding over both mammoth and minute systems. Where I teach these blue laws are never even mentioned, for the time is now here when superintendents and boards of education know that the majority of small-town teachers will set a good example when their pupils are present. Good sense commands such professional dignity. Any other time the pedagogical potentates know their teachers' lives are their own and

wisely make no recommendations for the way they are spent.

People pity the small-town teacher. She's in a rut, they say. She is not a success, they say. If wealth is their yardstick of success, then the little community instructor, indeed, is not a success. But if they are measuring success with the yardsticks of service, satisfaction, and contentment, she is successful. Teaching in a small town has given me time to know that there are such things as contentment, leisure time, friends, and relaxation. And these I have teaching in Smalltown, America.

* * TRICKS of the TRADE * *

By TED GORDON

PENNY POST CARDS—There's nothing handier than a penny post card. Why not make it a habit to carry half a dozen cards in purse or pocket to have handy for answering that ad, for writing to an absent pupil, or for sending a Trick of the Trade to this department right now!

ERASE YOUR TROUBLES—To get full benefit from your rubber eraser, the easiest way, of course, is to rub the smudgy black deposit off on some rough surface such as the under part of a desk. But another way

is to use a knife or razor blade to cut "treads" or notches in the ends. Of course, tying erasers to typewriters will save a lot of annoying searching.

PARTHIAN SHOTS—A card file of 4 x 6 cards with tests and factual information makes for ready availability when there are a few minutes left at the close of the period and you want to occupy the class' attention to the end.—*Mrs. Dorothy Glane, Los Angeles.*

LESSON PLANS—A thick notebook may serve as a good lesson plan book because: (1) a table of contents makes it easy to find the pages you want, (2) one page may be used for the general plan for the semester, (3) another section may be ruled off for daily assignments, (4) the rest of the pages may be devoted to information relating to class assignments and plans.—*Mrs. Dorothy Glane, Los Angeles.*

FACULTY HOBBY LOBBY—Have hobby displays to acquaint pupils with teachers' outside interests. Make human beings out of teachers.—*Miss Mary Beery, Lima, Ohio.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Readers are invited to submit aids and devices which may be of help to others. Please try to limit contributions to 50 words or fewer—the briefer the better. Original ideas are preferred; if an item is not original, be sure to give your source. This publication reserves all rights to material submitted, and no items will be returned. Address contributions to THE CLEARING HOUSE, Dr. Gordon teaches in East Los Angeles Junior College, Los Angeles, Cal.*

FEAR is the ROOT of all DISCIPLINE

By
WILLIAM PLUTTE

I AM MERELY inquiring. It is not that I intend facetiousness—rather, this is a figurative obeisance to the learned ones, that collection of illustrious educators who reach into Webster, withdraw a word, and begin developing cycles of meanings so the word fits any particular definition or summarization.

The introduction is not quite clear, so I will elaborate. I will attempt to review an old standby of education—discipline. No, I'm not going to reveal a secret formula which will turn your verbally untidy classroom into a haven for meticulous teachers. What I am presenting is a plea for cognizance of facts. Let's not have a re-hash of well-meant evaluations developed during round-tables of educators who haven't been in public-school classrooms since they first discovered their flairs for policy-making.

This isn't an attempt to ridicule serious-minded or idealistic teachers. All I want is an understanding of how to do my job in the best possible way, and yet not have to compromise my conscience or seek solace in the fact that I can always word my methods in parlance congenial to the current educational philosophy.

First, let me state that good classroom discipline is necessary and desirable. And before *that* word is hotly contested, we will assume it indicates a classroom wherein the student speaks only when recognized, is polite, neat, performs his work diligently, and is a unit of a well-ordered, intelligent, truth-seeking group. If that is your belief we can go on. If you are muttering to yourself stop right now.

Now, how do we get that discipline? AHA! I hear murmurings of "democratic ideals," "way of living," "equal planes," "teacher personality," "group living," and many other educational clichés. Well, though a youngster in this profession, I have heard most of these philosophical assertions, so I realize I will be committing pedagogical heresy when I make my next statement. The well-disciplined classroom is a result of Fear. Now, all the schoolmasters who have always-interested, always-alert, and always-busy students—you need have no fear the statement is aimed in your direction.

With this elimination narrowing the field so that the remaining few teachers form a small but select group of gropers, let's carry on.

When you have a group come into your room, seat itself quietly and begin work, is it because of _____ (Fill in your belief), or because of fear? I say fear.

We can take three cases and analyze them. Case A: the brilliant student from a nice family. He is good because: his family would

EDITOR'S NOTE

"Let me explain," writes Mr. Plutte, "that I have no gripe about education, nor about anyone connected with it. I like young people, and, in the majority, they like me. I think I have an idea, and feel like putting it down in writing." The author teaches in Ells Junior High School, Richmond, Cal.

be shocked if he were otherwise; he would probably fail to get into college; his teacher would lose faith in him; he would have less esteem in the eyes of his classmates. So he is good.

Case B: the average student. He has no particular aspiration to outstanding scholarship, yet he has learned that poor grades and after-school lectures are avoided by following rules.

Case C: He is the class troublemaker who has learned that "You don't get away with anything" in this particular class. It was made clear the first day, and his usual "clowning" seemed to fizzle out under the steady gaze of the teacher.

But maybe you are the teacher who is

"loved by his students." Is not the mere thought of hurting your feelings a fear that preys, perhaps, on the mind of your star pupil?

Go on and on with your cases and you will find that fear is the motivating force behind most actions. From the time you were spanked for throwing your mush on the floor, to the quick glance at your speedometer, on a Sunday drive, when you see a uniformed cyclist in your rear-view mirror, fear has been your governor, your accelerator.

When I first began mulling this proposition over I tried to rationalize, but no matter how I sliced discipline it still came out Fear.



"IN MY OPINION . . ."

This department will appear from time to time. Readers are welcome to express their opinions pro or con on anything that appears in THE CLEARING HOUSE, or to comment on current problems of secondary education. We shall publish as many letters, or excerpts from letters, as space allows. Ed.

The Matter of Dignity

To the Editor:

Recently the Board of Education of the City of New York handed down a decision in which a declaration of policy and thought was expressed to the effect that teachers like members of the judiciary had certain standards of "dignity" to live up to in order to best serve the children and the cause of education. May I express what I believe to be the reaction of many teachers in the following manner:

Teacher's Prayer

Oh, give me this day
Some new pedagogic devices
For the old have become deleterious vices.
Help me to find
A new motivation
To stir my pupils into acute cerebration.
The times are so tense,
Give me the pivotal questions
To awaken and startle the sense

And my pupils' resistant reflexions.
And, oh, can you tell
Of a summary question so phrased
That at the shock of the bell
The children should not feel so dazed?
But, above all
Thank you for a definition so wise
That I could skillfully devise
How to match Dignity with thrall.

Martin Wolfson

Technical High School
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Advice Requested

To the Editor:

I submit the following for your consideration:

What should be my advice in this situation? A highly successful man, who did not finish public school, wants me to advise his son on the college to attend. Here am I, a teacher with almost six years of college education, yet likely I shall not be able to send my child to college. Here is he, a man with little education in a job which provides him the wherewithal to send his child to whichever college the child desires to attend. And I am supposed to advise him! What advice can I give?

Howard Davis

Senior High School
Maplewood, Mo.

WHAT TO DO WITH A PARENT

By
ALMA HILL

PARENTS are our best friends. Many good people, long in the teaching profession, and with the scars to show for it, will take exception to this. Nevertheless, the statement is true and can be proved. All that is necessary is more understanding.

At heart all parents are alike. Superficially, of course, they may classify as A, B, C, D, or E, depending on the last report card; yet this very uniformity of response proves the basic likeness. To know what any given parent thinks of us, we need only look up the record. Our measure of their children's success is apt to be our measure of them as parents, is it not? Then it is also apt to be their measure of us as teachers.

To illustrate: recently an educator brought his own son for a demonstration test before a classful of other teachers. Now, this was an especially good boy. His manners were wonderful. He was a trifle shy but not at all awkward; he was polite, patient, and considerate enough for twice his age. We all loved him. Then, too, he was very intelligent. He had rare mathematical gifts. To be sure, his verbal abilities were not above average, but boys tend that way, as we all know.

However, his father had noticed the boy fumbling with verbal items above his age level, and later expressed himself as follows: that he had long doubted that the schools were bringing out the best in the boy; that they had therefor changed him to another school with a bigger reputation; but, his grades falling, they had concluded that the new school was still worse, and had changed him back again.

This parent was an educator himself; yet it seems never to have occurred to him that the drop in grades might be caused by higher standards. No, no. C grade report, C grade teacher.

He also remarked that home influences might have been discouraging inasmuch as the boy's mother was a teacher of English, and exacting. Now there can hardly be a greater advantage, in learning a subject, than living in the home of a teacher of that subject. Yet even this was judged by results in a single instance, without stopping to consider the boy's natural preferences and propensities.

Since there is no apparent logic in this

EDITOR'S NOTE

Where parents are concerned, Mrs. Hill as a teacher prefers a prosperous peace to a state of war that impoverishes all concerned. Once you understand why parents so universally are unreasonable and even ridiculous, she believes, you practically have your credentials as a first-class diplomat. Then you can look at little Benny and at yourself with the eyes of his parent, and you can handle the situation resultfully. Benny's salvation often depends upon it. And remember, "A Benny saved is a Benny learned." That's a thought that you can carry home with you, if you don't mind having bad grammar in the house. Mrs. Hill teaches English in Batchelder Junior High School, North Reading, Mass.

parent's remarks, we must consider that such conclusions must come not from the head, but from that equally important organ, the heart. We must consider not the logic, but the psychology of such ideas.

Here is the rule: Love is one thing and good sense is another. If we expect reason of parents, it is we who are unreasonable. Things become clear only when we assume that they love their child beyond all reason.

First, they expect him to be better than anybody else's child, in every way. Of course, that is ridiculous. On the other hand, the child keeps stretching towards meeting these high standards, and thus does achieve more than he otherwise would. Perhaps that is not so ridiculous after all.

Second, they take his failures to heart as if they were their own. This is an intolerable condition of mind and cannot last. It has to be passed on to the nearest person. The teacher is right there.

Is this clear so far?

Then the important thing to do is to see the child just as his parents do. He really is wonderful. We have to see that, and have faith in it, and we must rely on it just as they do.

Then, too, we must never blame the child

for his troubles. Parental identification is too strong. No parent can believe such an assertion. Indeed, the truth probably is that nobody is to blame.

We should never say, "He could do it if he would only try." We should not even suggest that he isn't trying. That is libel. How can we be sure? If we will admit that we have not yet found the combination that will help that child, then we can honestly claim to be still trying.

That is when the parent relaxes and begins to tell you tales out of school about the child—which are far more valuable than rubies. Parents then will also give you moral support where you need it most, shut off the radio until the home lessons are done, buy study aids, and supply private tutoring of an excellent sort. But most of all, they will make you acquainted with the child as daily classroom encounters never could do. Moreover, the school has a strong friend after that. We need such friends, and so do our pupils.

With such mutual understanding, parents are our best friends and natural allies.

On the other hand, if this understanding is neglected, bad things happen.

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.



Mike Could Go Along with a Gag

By JOSEPH R. KANYA

It was a hot day. The temperature had soared over the 100 degree mark. In the classroom I was having a difficult time with the youngsters. Finally an idea struck me.

"Look," I said to the class. "A pilot flying a plane from New York to London on a clear day has no difficulty in reaching his destination. After he gets there he thinks nothing of the task. Anyone can fly under ideal conditions. It was really no achievement. However, on the next flight he has to fight storms, winds, ice, sleet, etc. He finally gets to his destination tired, but highly pleased and satisfied with a job well done. It was really an achievement to have made this flight.

"Now, anyone can get his lesson on a cool day when everything is ideal. But when everyone is hot, uncomfortable, perspiring, and easily irritated—if under conditions like this you get your work done, you too can say that it was an achievement, a task well done. Now all of you go to work and do the assignment."

Everyone began to work earnestly. In the front seat sat Mike, a big strapping lad. He soon had his book closed and was slouched in his chair.

I walked over to him and asked, "What is the matter, Mike?"

Sheepishly he looked up and said, "I'm sorry, sir, but I just crashed."

EDUCATION

*If that's our goal,
we've achieved it!*

FOR MEDIOCRITY

By

JAY ELLIS RANSOM

WHEN a nation-wide profession like Education, which presumes to leadership in America, finds almost universal fault with itself, the time has come for critical appraisal. For the past few years much has appeared about education and teachers in the nation's news, little of it either encouraging or complimentary.

What is wrong with education today? One of the answers should not be hard to discern. It is not concerned with low salaries, low social prestige, unattractive personnel. These represent only the surface symptoms of a deep-seated disease which has been developing in American education during the past four decades.

One does not deny that America needs, more than anything else, first-class leadership. Yet what state educational system in the entire Union has geared itself to educate its brilliant children for capacity performance?

We have almost no national or state scholarships worth striving for by our promising youngsters. We manifest little real, bone-deep social interest, as a nation, in providing our bright young minds with the maximum of training in fields of their chosen interest. Our counseling program for directing the right minds toward the right futures still stands as a figment of the national imagination.

"Teach only to the average and the below-average," are familiar words dinned at every teacher's ear. Into the classrooms stream the dull, the below normal, squeezing out the intelligent brains by an inexorable increase in numbers.

We have built magnificent buildings

and poured millions of dollars into pre-vocational and vocational plants to which we permit only our dull children to aspire. We, as a nation, place no premium on intelligence any more, believing naïvely that our bright children will get along somehow by themselves while we labor over the unpromising.

Our whole philosophy of education since the turn of the 20th century has tended toward the destruction of initiative and the individualism which, from 1620 to 1900, stamped its progressive mark on the American type.

In 1880, 43% of the 287,000 public-school teachers were men. Four decades later the proportion of men teachers had declined to 14%. The era of "Momism" has shocked the nation. Since 1920 the number of men teachers in the public school has slowly increased until in 1942-43, the last year for

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mr. Ransom, a science teacher in Santa Monica, Cal., High School, is concerned about what he considers to be our failure to provide a proper education for the "bright young minds" in our student bodies. He feels that in "diluting" our courses to achieve mass education, we have lowered the standards that prevailed in great-grandfather's day. THE CLEARING HOUSE will be glad to consider articles that either take issue with Mr. Ransom's statements or enlarge upon them.

which figures are available, only 18% of the 840,000 public-school teachers were men.

In round numbers we have only as many men teaching today as we had in 1880. During that period the total teacher population expanded fourfold!

During fifty years of "education for democracy" we have been more and more concentrating on externals—i.e., buildings, shops, the progressive method, football, and huge athletic fields. Fewer and fewer dollars proportionately have gone into sound, scholarly preparation of teachers, even though the numerical years of college training have been increased. Teachers of today seem far removed from the realm of scholarship so prized by pedagogues of yesteryear.

We have "mass-educated" our nation at the cost of lowering our religious, moral, and educational standards. Great-grandfather's fourth-grade reader is today too advanced and difficult for some high-school seniors! Look at one—it can still be found—and see for yourself.

Today we seem bent on educating our youth for conformism, all the way from the ubiquitous American hot dog to atomic philosophy of world portent. We are fast becoming a nation of sheep following dull-witted leaders.

We are no longer a nation of pioneers. The physical and mental frontiers have shifted to another continent. The deadly pull of the masses is swinging our educators away from education for leadership to the enforced participation in an uninteresting orthodoxy of American Babbitry!

The American nation, richer than it ever has been as the last of our great natural resources reveals the bottom of the barrel, has developed no single, unified plan of education. Nor have we honestly attempted to make sound-thinking leaders out of our boys and girls. Political, social, scientific, and philosophical pioneering have been left to the unpleasant ideologies of unfriendly neighbor nations.

We developed the means for rousing the best in our youth when we developed the public high school a century ago. Looking back over the growth of fabulously expensive, awesomely imposing public school plants, and witnessing the graduates that come out of them, must we admit that we have failed to live up to our expectations? Have we deluded ourselves that mass education is education for democracy? Aren't we achieving instead, education for mediocrity now that the seemingly endless source of brilliant intellects from Europe has dried up with the destruction of the rigorous European systems of education?

Have we forgotten Plato, who showed more than 2,000 years ago that the ideal society can only be obtained through the most intensive educational training vested in the nation's best qualified minds?

What is wrong with American education is deeper than salaries, more insidious than the spreading forces of apathy and mental inertia toward learning.

As one administrator phrased it, the principal objective of modern education seems to be the dilution of courses to make them palatable for easily nauseated intellects.



Rotating Homework

I am offering the suggestion that one hour a day outside of school is sufficient for homework. I agree that even that is too much if it comes every day, but that as an average it might be possible.

Here in Chippewa Falls [Junior-Senior High School] we are experimenting with a schedule

which permits longer assignments in English classes for over the weekend. Mondays, special work in social sciences; Tuesday, math; and so forth throughout the week. The plan is by no means perfect, but a step in the right direction.—CECILIA KRANZFELDER in *Wisconsin Journal of Education*.

MAN of MANNERISMS

He taught me how not to teach

By LOUIS FOLEY

GOING THROUGH some old papers the other day, I came upon something which reminded me vividly of a man whom I had not heard of for many years. Through the perspective of time, I see him now in a different light from that in which I viewed him when I was a callow youth. He seems to me to show very strikingly a truth which is borne in upon me more and more strongly as the years go by. It is the fact that we owe much to many people whom we hardly think of as having "helped" us at all.

He was a man who, so far as I know, devoted most of his life to the profession of teaching. If only it were possible to turn back the flight of time, I could wish that before he went too far as a teacher he might have made use of a modern device which I have known to be very helpful in a number of cases. It is a plan by which a teacher may find out, in an impersonal way, just what his pupils think about his manner of doing his work, and particularly what faults he has that grate upon them.¹

Perhaps in his case it would have done no good; I am not at all sure. At any rate I feel impelled to testify. Out of all my experience and observation, his deportment comes readily to mind as the most outstanding example of objectionable habits of which all too many teachers are guilty in some degree, and of which they ought to be made aware before it is too late to start correcting them.

During the period when he must have been in his prime, it was my fortune to be enrolled in more than one of his classes.

¹ *The Evaluation of Student Reactions to Teaching Procedures*, by Roy C. Bryan. Edwards Brothers, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1945.

This was not a matter of choice on my part; it was simply that I was either required or advised to complete certain work which he taught. It was, however, subject matter toward which I had some natural inclination. So I came to him as a pupil rather more favorably predisposed toward him than otherwise.

Now I can honestly say that throughout all my years of schooling, from the primary grades to my latest graduate studies in several universities, I have felt a genuine liking and admiration for the great majority of all the teachers that I ever had. I can remember some, in fact, whom I liked and respected when it seemed to me that most of their other students did not. My natural attitude toward an instructor was always an assumption that whatever he did was all right, an acceptance of him as a model virtually beyond criticism. The subject of this sketch, however, aroused me to consider a teacher's behavior less uncritically.

With extreme vividness I remember all his peculiar mannerisms in the classroom. Like many "self-made" public speakers, he was in complete bondage to a small set of pointless gestures which he repeated continually. They were always irrelevant, and instead of enforcing anything that he had to say, they merely distracted attention because they were too conspicuous to be ignored. They were awkward movements, timid and negative, never aggressive or suggestive of any power or thought behind them.

More distinctly than anything else about him, I remember his hands. Any person's hands, I think, have a kind of natural

EDITOR'S NOTE

The teacher about whom Mr. Foley writes from vivid memory had a full répertoire of annoying mannerisms, and he ran through them like an automaton at every meeting of the class. Since his teaching was as boring as his antics, Mr. Foley suffered a lot—and learned how a teacher should not behave. The author is director of French at Ecole Champlain, Ferrisburg, Vt.

beauty when they look capable of doing things. His, however, had as little of that appearance as any that I can recall ever having seen. Though he was rather slender than otherwise, his hands looked fat; they seemed stiff without strength, lacking in any suggestion of physical force and without any sign of grace or delicate dexterity to make up for it. He always had to be picking up some article and holding it, and his hand always looked as if it were made to be holding something else, though you couldn't imagine what. His inevitable gestures, which might have been annoying anyhow, constantly made more inescapably obvious that unattractive part of his physique.

Every class hour began with a ridiculous ceremony which was always repeated as exactly as anything can be that is done awkwardly. He would enter the classroom with a somewhat diffident, apologetic air, usually carrying a pile of books which were mere stage properties; he seldom opened any of them, though he might later move them to half a dozen different places on his table. Walking rather quickly and yet stiffly he would reach the haven of his desk and get safely behind it. (I remember his ungraceful, old-fashioned shoes, which always looked too tight. I imagined that he suffered from corns.)

His general appearance faintly suggested that of an old-time farmer who is all dressed

up and not very comfortable in his go-to-meeting clothes. He seemed a little vain withal; in neckties, for instance, he was by no means conservative in choice of colors, and they were seldom in what I considered good taste. They were the sort of thing that is too conspicuous not to have been consciously chosen; yet he was the kind of person who, when he wore something "loud," would do so not boldly and confidently but a little ashamedly.

Having arrived behind the desk, with a jerky movement he would pull out the lowest right-hand drawer. Thus, with his chair turned at a certain angle, he had a place to prop his foot. Then with his right hand he would pick up the nice, new, long, yellow pencil (you couldn't keep your eyes from following it) which he always used in gesturing. With these indispensable preparations, and glancing vaguely at the first few rows over the top of his spectacles, he was ready to begin.

Of course everyone has his little mannerisms, but they are not necessarily offensive and may even be mildly pleasant as a sort of "human" touch. His, however, annoyed me more than any other person's that I can recall. They seemed to go along symbolically with his methods and attitude. His class hours remain clear in my memory because they were among the dulllest that I have ever lived through. At bottom, I think, they were boresome for us because they were so for him. They were chores to be got out of the way so that he could get back to his books, which probably seemed the *real* thing in his world.

Never, in his classroom, did I feel in any degree the qualities by which I have seen many another teacher turn a moment of teaching into an intellectual or aesthetic illumination that remains as a permanent possession. There was none of the smooth mastery that might make one admire even a teacher whom he disliked; none of the gay enthusiasm which some people have (and make contagious) for subjects far more

"dull" than his; none of the suppleness, the give-and-take, the spirited attack, which might make a class hour an exciting experience, even though sometimes you dreaded it; no good-humored establishment of immediate *rapprochement* with the class; no warm air of dealing with real people in a living situation; no businesslike taking hold of the task and going at it for all you are worth. The hour never had the effect of crystallizing into a definite lesson that you felt you had.

The method was mainly the old-fashioned one of "recitations." Those who had systematically studied the day's assignment and happened to be called upon, no doubt were enabled to gain a little firmer grip on the material by the exercise of public expression, but otherwise I think no one profited very much from the minutes we spent with him. He was not a skillful questioner, not quick at adjusting or starting again from a new angle, and not particularly patient with honest misunderstanding. Yet he was

as putty in the hands of a few shrewd bluffers in the group, who could make a little knowledge go a long way. I feel that he wronged both his students and himself by his ways of doing in the classroom.

And yet, after all, I am very glad to have been in his classes. Though that experience has left in my consciousness no facts or principles which he was supposed to teach, nevertheless I feel that I have greatly profited from it. He gave me unforgettable lessons in the details of how a teacher should *not* behave. Surely an important part of recognizing something genuine is the clear recognition of what it is not. By his demonstrations of the opposite of my own ideals, I believe that he has helped me to avoid many faults, and to make my classes better, or at least less objectionable, than they might otherwise have been. So I suppose that I should be grateful to him. But I think also that he doesn't deserve *too* much credit, for he certainly did not "plan it that way."



Field Trip with a Camera

A field trip to a biology student in Blackwell High School is nothing new, but this one was different. How different? Well, we had never had a film taken of our own field trip, and therein the difference lay. . . .

The school bus that day, late in May 1947, carried a happy and excited troupe to our destination about five miles southwest of town. We devoured our lunches and promptly forgot them. We had carefully studied our plans, and the students knew the purpose of the trip. Each one had the responsibility for finding a suitable subject for a picture. There were thirty-six pictures on the strip, and these must be finished in time for the group to be back in class by one o'clock.

Before the last person was out of the bus, two of the boys had caught snakes and insisted on a picture with the teacher. Then the calls for "Photographer!" came in quick succession.

Poison ivy in luxuriant growth along the highway was one of the first pictures. An eroded bank grown over with grass attracted the attention of one student. Devastation caused by water gave us a good subject and the opportunity to see the results of no drainage. Someone brought a turtle

that refused to show its head until a bit of burning paper brought out not only the head but a look of surprise, if turtles look that way. The prize picture of all was the rabbit hole. All we needed was a "For Rent" sign. I can take you to the exact spot if anyone is interested.

Our photographer, Kenneth Vowel, with his new 35mm. camera loaded with the film strip, and Harold Thomas with his kodak taking duplicate pictures, were on the jump constantly, and felt as if they had really earned that day's credit in biology. . . .

Every picture on the film was a good one, and what thrills to see yourself in action. With one voice we all wanted to go again. But school was nearly over for that year and three other biology classes were hankering to make such a trip.

The film strip, "Blackwell Biology Class Makes History," together with the script that explains each picture, is now a unit in our film library and will be used by the biology department classes each year.

This fall our first adventure into the visual field is to be with colored films.—EVELYN BYLER in *Oklahoma Teacher*.

AUDIO-VISUAL:

The "New Look" in Lessons

By

OLGA J. ANDERSON

DECIDING THAT it would be interesting to get that "new look" in my lessons, I hid myself to the local halls of learning to investigate the latest fashion in education—which is the audio-visual approach to teaching.

I felt certain the course would be worthwhile the moment I saw all of the beautiful gadgets in the well-equipped laboratory classroom. There were wire and tape recorders, various motion-picture projectors, and opaque, overhead, and filmstrip devices—complete with attachments—among other fascinating novelties.

However, the shining new devices didn't provide the biggest thrill. That came later. At the end of the course I made a most important and exciting discovery: The most interesting thing about audio-visual education is WHAT IT ISN'T!

And this is what it isn't:

Audio-visual teaching isn't all new gadgets.

Audio-visual teaching isn't completely audio-visual.

Audio-visual teaching does not mean throwing away the textbook.

Audio-visual teaching does not dispense with the teacher.

Audio-visual teaching is simply "better teaching" with the traditional aids you have *always* been using.

Audio-visual teaching is possible—believe it or not—without a film projector, a phonograph recorder, or a slide projector.

And last, but not least, every *good* teacher is already using the audio-visual approach to teaching, though he or she may not realize it.

Do you doubt these words? Then ask yourself—Have you ever heard of field trips? How about classroom demonstrations? Have you ever planned an eye-catching bulletin board? How about the maps you use? Do you refer to the cartoons, the graphs and charts in your textbook? Has your class ever created a poster series? Do you conduct the forum type of discussion? Doesn't your class occasionally use newspapers and current magazines for reference purposes? And how about that blackboard you use every day? Also, you've certainly heard about colored chalk.

These things sound very familiar, don't they?

All of these are audio-visual aids!

EDITOR'S NOTE

The "beautiful gadgets" and machines now available for audio-visual education are nice—if your school can afford them. But if they are beyond reach, Mrs. Anderson advises you not to despair. She has found that audio-visual teaching is simply "better teaching" with the traditional aids that teachers have always been using—that you can set about improving your classroom teaching with audio-visual tricks that cost the school nothing. Mrs. Anderson teaches in the Metropolitan School of Business, a graduate school associated with Metropolitan High School as a part of the Los Angeles, Calif., city school system.

Wherein, you may ask, do the old and the new mingle and become that modern and much-sought-after teaching device which audio-visual experts recommend for "better teaching"?

That "new look" comes about by streamlining and modernizing your old devices to make them more attractive, more stimulating, and more satisfying to the student. In other words, the secret of the "new look" is showmanship.

But how, you may ask again, can you apply the principles of showmanship to these audio-visual aids?

That is the \$64 question!

The answer may be found in two ways: your local library undoubtedly has the latest books available on the subject; or your favorite university is offering an extension division or summer-session course on this intriguing subject. In any event, it's yours for the seeking. And the answers will vary according to your individual objective and your particular field of inquiry. The

audio-visual approach is simply teaching on the "expert" level.

One thing is certain—if you want that "new look," you will have to do some remodeling of the traditional teaching methods to get it. The results, however, will more than compensate any teacher for his extra effort.

The main point to remember is this: you can have audio-visual education tomorrow if you want it, without spending a penny of your school's money. Naturally, you can get still better results if your school can afford to buy some of the newest audio-visual equipment now available. But the equipment alone, without the know-how of the audio-visual approach, will not give you the results you want. It is the teacher, and not the equipment, who must provide audio-visual instruction. Good audio-visual instruction depends on expert teaching.

Whatever you do, that "new look" is yours for the taking. All it requires is "better teaching."



School Exhibits Do a Job at a Fair

Washington State educators took advantage of one of the state's most important events, the Western Washington Fair in Puyallup, September 18-26, to bring in dramatic form to the thousands of Washingtonians who flocked to the fair the school needs of their boys and girls. Emphasized was the fact that educators are striving to attain the highest standards in teachers and facilities.

Featured in the 240-foot school building on the fair grounds were models of modern school plants displayed along with pictures of inadequate school conditions and with the present tremendous rise in school populations stressed. A modern classroom showed latest lighting facilities, desks, and other modern functional equipment.

Pearl A. Wanamaker, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and her staff, together with teachers and administrators from schools throughout the area, arranged the exhibits for the 16 school booths.

Other exhibits included a movie theater featuring

types of films shown in classrooms; a booth on teaching materials showing slides, film strips, and voice recordings; a vocational education booth featuring the rehabilitation program of the State Board for Vocational Education for those injured in service; a journalism section where students produced a local paper; a graphic arts display of paintings and wood and clay models, where children worked on their creations; a recreation booth showing handicraft items produced by boys and girls in summer recreation programs; a physical-education display, a health booth, a library section, an exhibit presented jointly by the Washington Education Association and the Parent-Teacher Association and an adult-education center.

Nine school bands alternated schedules to give two concerts a day and home economics demonstrations were presented twice a day, showing preparation of foods for freezing and home canning. The home economics section also presented fashion shows.

STAGE CREWS

can be IMPORTANT

By
HENRY ROSEN

FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, when I first came to the Gloucester, Mass., High School, the first stage crew was organized to help put on a musical production in the city hall. Our city-hall stage can best be described as Elizabethan in its simplest sense. I assembled a crew of six boys who were interested in helping to stage our production. We had to start from scratch.

Our first problem was to make two pipe battens thirty feet long, hang heavy pulleys to hold them, to make and hang a main curtain. Lighting at that time was purely secondary. We made the most elementary footlights, from a flat board, light sockets, with sheets of tin for reflectors. We bought a few photo-flood lights, and, by hanging them from the balcony, we had our overhead lights. In spite of all of these handicaps, the Gloucester High School had its first stage crew. From then on it was a foregone conclusion.

A group of six to ten boys were with me all of the time they were in school. I trained them in theoretical stage lighting and construction. The training had to be theoretical because we had absolutely nothing of our own to work with. Then the miracle happened! A new high school! Now we had a real stage on which to work—two spots, two floods, a board with three color dimmers, a projection booth, and real footlights. Since 1940, the first year in our new building, the Gloucester High School stage crew has held forth in the auditorium.

We do all of the staging for assemblies and school plays, and no outside event can be staged unless the stage crew does the work. In this way we protect our own equip-

ment from mishandling by outsiders. You see, our equipment is very precious to us because it is almost impossible to replace without a great deal of red tape (through channels), as it must be for all things pertaining to schools. The stage crew has grown from humble, very humble beginnings on a bare platform to one of the most important student organizations in the school, from the point of view of service.

Not only does the stage crew care for the equipment in the auditorium, it also is very useful to the classroom teachers. When we moved into our new building, we had a new 16mm sound machine to use in the auditorium and in our classrooms. In addition, we had various other visual machines: a combination 2 x 2 slide and filmstrip, a Balopticon, and a larger slide machine for projection from the booth of the auditorium to the screen. The boys are all taught to use and care for the visual equipment. The boys' free periods are listed on a card, which enables me to reach any boy at any time. During free periods the boys

EDITOR'S NOTE

Fourteen years ago Mr. Rosen organized the Stage Crew of Gloucester, Mass., High School. It has grown, he says, into one of the important student organizations of the school. The group handles the staging of all school events, and operates the visual-aids machines for the teachers. Mr. Rosen teaches in the school and is faculty stage manager.

operate the visual machines for the faculty. The teacher is thus able to spend all of his time on his program and has no worry about the technicalities of the presentation. This freedom, in my opinion, makes for more effective teaching with visual aids.

Not only do the crew boys take care of the visual work in the school, but whenever a piece of equipment is taken from the building for use by outside organizations, a crewman goes with it. This practice has helped us to make our equipment last for eight years with a minimum of damage and replacement. The responsibility gives the stage crew prestige and builds confidence in the hearts and minds of the boys.

The results of the years of training have been especially gratifying to me. During World War II, stage-crew boys received Government Projectionist licenses immediately, and three boys were put in complete charge of camp theaters. The boys became stage managers, lighting men, and professional projectionists in 35mm theaters. The spirit of the stage crew has helped make better students of boys who would ordinarily drop by the wayside, because we insist upon good standing in studies.

The Gloucester High School stage crew consists of sixteen boys, four from each class. We take four freshmen each year for the crew after tryouts. In this way we always have twelve experienced hands and four trainees. The freshmen must prove themselves worthy of membership through hard work and ability to take orders. The stage crew does not receive any remuneration in money for the 300-400 hours per year that they put into the stage work, but a member of the crew receives his Service Club G denoting his service for four years to the school.

All high schools should have a stage crew or its equivalent. Stage dust gets into the blood of many of the boys, and they have a chance for good careers. The crew also gives the boy who cannot face an audience, but who loves the stage, an opportunity to do something constructive. Think of the help it is to a dramatic coach not to have to worry about the staging and lighting angles of a production. Stage crews are not difficult to form or to maintain, provided there is someone who will devote the time necessary to mold them into smooth, efficient units. We did it and are doing it.



Me—or Us?

A cursory perusal of curriculums, activities, and objectives of the schools would seem to indicate sufficient attention to social consciousness and a minimizing of the value of individual success. Apparently, there is no dearth of opportunities to develop social understanding in global geography, world literature, world history, and a continuum of social studies from primary grades to graduate school. Surely, organized sports, forensic programs, and a score of extracurricular activities provide a basis for the promotion of social consciousness through the need for group cooperation and team work.

Practically, however, a more intimate analysis of the procedure and results of the school program reveals that the value of individual success is yet of pre-eminent importance. The failure to develop attitudes of universality in formal courses, the

premium placed upon individual showmanship in competitive (in some cases commercialized) sports and other extracurricular activities, the appeal to the personal ego in activities that are designed for group participation—these and countless other examples are testimony to the over-emphasis on individual success.

The reflection of a society composed of individuals geared to surpass one another because the prize is awarded to the winner of the race is shown in the slow progress made in modifying and reforming the school marking system. It is found in the constant need for extrinsic incentives. It is characteristic of the philosophy expressed in vocational goals and in commencement programs. Success is still measured in terms of the position to be attained on the economic and "social" ladder.—LEONARD HAAS in *Wisconsin Journal of Education*.



SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST



Edited by THE STAFF

VOTING: Each year, more citizens of New York City vote in the election of a local beer queen than vote in the election of the city's mayor. At least, that's what a recent Reingold beer advertisement stated. Annually the brewery runs advertisements showing six pretty girls in full-color photographs, and invites residents of New York City to vote for Miss Reingold, who will be the model in the brewery's ads for that year. This beer-queen contest, says Reingold, has become the largest city-wide election in the U. S. How does the brewery get out the vote when even the political machines can't? Well, there may be a clue in the fact that among the 6 girl candidates there are always blondes, brunettes, and redheads. These girls offer the voters a clear-cut difference in choices.

CIRCLE: Frustrated school children are a product of frustrated teachers. That's an opinion of Dr. Gordon Stephens, stated at the International Conference on Child Psychiatry in London, according to an Associated Press story. And why are teachers frustrated? Probably, Dr. Stephens thinks, because their initiative is smothered by too rigid supervision and public meddling in their private lives. Will Dr. Stephens allow that this is due to frustrated supervisors and a frustrated public? Then we would have a nice vicious, or frustrated, circle, closed at the point where frustrated parent and frustrated child come together in the living room for a miserable evening.

NURSES & TEACHERS: The nation faces a desperate problem in the present shortage of nurses and declining enrolments in nursing schools, says James R. Miller in *This Week*. America is short 60,000 nurses; 90% of U. S. hospitals haven't enough nurses to function properly, and many have had to close down wards or wings; and enrolment of new students in nursing schools has dropped 45% in the past 3 years. This has a familiar ring to school people. Nurses, like teachers, have been poorly paid. Efforts of both to obtain higher salaries have been repressed with the reminder that they belong to a dedicated profession, and shouldn't think so much about mere money. Evidently the plea has worn thin.

SCHOLARSHIPS: In the 5th annual Pepsi-Cola scholarship competition, 119 four-year college scholarships and 600 college-entrance prizes totaling

\$350,000 will be awarded to successful high-school seniors, announces the Pepsi-Cola Scholarship Board, Palo Alto, Cal. The Board states that this is "the nation's most comprehensive search for unusual talent among high-school students." and that "almost half the secondary schools in the nation" participate in it. Winners in the preliminary examination will be announced in December; the final test will be given in January 1949; and awards will be announced in March.

BOOK CLUB: The Teen Age Book Club, started 2 years ago by Pocket Books, Inc., the 25-cent reprint publisher, as a reading promotion project for high-school students, now has Scholastic Magazines as co-sponsor. The Scholastic group of periodicals will promote the Club and distribute its books.

CUT CLASSICS: Some high-school English teachers have resented the appearance of "edited" classic novels, cut and simplified for present-day high-school students, on the grounds that a simplified version spoils a work of art. W. Somerset Maugham, in *Great Novelists and Their Novels*, just published by John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, sides with the teachers who approve of edited classics. "A sensible person does not read a novel as a task," Mr. Maugham says. "He reads it as a diversion. . . . Everybody skips, but to skip without loss is not easy." He believes that an edited classic, in which the skipping is done for the reader by an expert, is a good thing. In fact, Mr. Maugham has simplified 10 novels which he considers the best ever written, and Winston is now in process of publishing them individually. *Great Novelists and Their Novels* is a collection of the introductions to the novels he edited.

VENERABLE: Yale University announces that this is its 248th academic year. Nevertheless, it spryly opened up a new program whereby students are offered a choice of four different methods of getting a B.A. degree—all of which involve study. Apparently Yale offers no special method for star football players.

ETHICS: During the preceding school year, a confidential opinion questionnaire was sent to 18,000 North Carolina public-school teachers and administrators by the State Education Commission. Rumors, says an editorial in *North Carolina Education*,
(Continued on page 190)



Community School: 3 Questions for Its Planners

THE COMMUNITY school has been pretty easy sailing in a number of places during the past decade—in the communities where it has been eulogized pedagogically, written about in fashionable educational lingo, and praised as the model offspring of the best school planners and the finest school buildings.

But in a smaller number of communities, the difficult attempt actually to establish a community school has caused a furor of thought, group planning, and activity. Hard work—sometimes friction between personalities and organizations—and the problems of changing a dead duck into a golden goose confront the planners of the community school.

Here's the problem in nucleus in a three-question quiz. It could be a twenty-question quiz. But three honestly answered queries are enough to indicate the level of community-centered activity in a given school system:

1. On what day does the local press come in for its weekly conference?
2. How many different kinds of community groups aid in the planning of school activities?
3. How is the curriculum being altered to provide for a growing youth-adult program of practical, cultural, creative, and vocational experience?

The press can be one of the most powerful liaison media between the school and the general public. It will make known opportunities in which the local population can plan and participate in programs undertaken within the school building. It will bring to the community a continuous picture of the progress as well as the needs

of the schools, thus strengthening public interest and support of the local educational system. As an instigator of good school-community relations and as a continuing influence toward this end, the press will turn out its most accurate releases as a result of direct explanation of educational issues by school officials. Thus the conference table should be dusted weekly and the ashtrays set at easy-reach intervals for visiting reporters.

What other types of leadership should be exerted by the school in its development as a community center? The leadership of inspiration and technique—the leadership that will establish the school as a coordinating agency for community groups and individuals who have need for its human and physical resources.

This is not synonymous with organizing an evening-school program and offering it ready-made to the public. Instead, it means discovering community needs through direct contact with local individuals and groups and then providing opportunity for specific lay programming requests and for the joint lay-educator planning of a flexible and constantly developing program. While the school should initiate its community role, its leadership actually lies in training the community to ask for and to plan the program of activities—the alternative to the superimposition of a series of set courses prescribed in the index of a bulletin.

The more school-centered the community becomes, the more the daily curriculum will be altered. Major issues and problems of the community will influence the heart of school activities.

Under the experimental leadership of the Sloan Foundation, students in Florida turned to the solution of one of the pressing daily problems affecting their lives. They worked on the physical improvement of their own homes. In Kentucky, students, during school hours, learned to turn a barren soil into a productive one. Increasingly schools throughout the country are providing a schoolwork program through which students gain practical experience in offices, stores, factories, and farms in their communities. In such sections neighbors are utilizing the facilities of the school for sewing, canning, community sings, and the consideration of local and international problems.

Instruction in this type of day-evening-youth-adult school can be provided by interested members of the regular day staff. But further sources offering real versatility and enthusiasm are the storekeeper whose hobby is building model airplanes and the lawyer who spends his spare time as an expert at astronomy. Local laymen and professionals can often arouse tremendous response in groups because their leadership

stems from genuine absorption with their avocations rather than from the use of formal teaching methods and the maintenance of "good discipline."

In using the school building as a community center, the doors will be kept open day and night during the regular school terms as well as throughout the summer months. Typewriters, sewing machines, libraries, cafeterias, auditoriums and gymnasiums will be continually used. Recreation, arts and crafts, drama and music, vocational and domestic skills along with civic action will find their natural locale in the school building and will become a part of the life stream of the people and of their community school.

The job involved is terrific. But so are the people who plan it. And so is the school that emerges from their plans.

VIVIENNE ANDERSON
Bartram High School
Consultant with School-Community
Relations Office
Philadelphia Public Schools
Philadelphia, Pa.

Have Some Fun in Class

By ETHEL M. JONES

"Have some fun with your pupils!" That was the strange advice that my mother gave me several years ago when I came home feeling somewhat defeated after a particularly trying day at school.

"Enjoy your pupils," she continued, "and don't take things so seriously. They just want to have a good time and are full of life. It is the exuberance of youth. Laugh with them. Some day you may wish for some of their noise, just as a mother whose children are grown would welcome some shouting in the hall or even some dirty finger marks left on the towels."

Although enjoying the homeroom period, which was scheduled at the end of the day, seemed impossible just then (and I still haven't come to the place where I yearn for noise), I did think over what she had said and decided that I wasn't going to be cheated out of the pleasure that I should have in

working with a wide-awake group of boys and girls.

It did make a difference when I began to have a good time with them and not let trifles bother me. Furthermore, the whole atmosphere became freer and easier. I refused to be irritated! When they saw that their teacher was not disturbed by having them ask to sharpen pencils, only a few (not half the class) found it necessary to sharpen theirs. Of course, I should not let anything really serious pass unnoticed, but, much to my relief, something serious rarely seemed to come up.

My mother was right. She had given me a valuable hint, for which I have been very grateful ever since. Now I feel that I am working and playing with my pupils and that it is not a contest with them on one side and me on the other. "We work together better after we have laughed together" is a quotation that I have found to be true.

➤ SCHOOL LAW REVIEW ➤

10 Recommendations of NEA Tenure Committee

By DANIEL R. HODGDON

In the preceding issue of *THE CLEARING HOUSE* Dr. Hodgdon began a discussion of the Tenure Report of the Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom of the National Education Association. He stated that the Committee's ten recommendations on tenure legislation are without doubt the best that have been formulated up to now. He suggested an eleventh and a twelfth recommendation which he believes should be added to the Committee's ten. Beginning in this issue, Dr. Hodgdon will analyze the Committee's recommendations individually.—*Ed.*

Recommendation I

This recommendation states that "Tenure legislation should be part of a teacher welfare program which includes sound provisions for minimum salary, health, and accident insurance, sick leave, and retirement."

To these provisions I would add sabbatical leave for study or travel. No community should have teachers who for a period of many years do not see some of the world they live in and who do not obtain new ideas from time to time through such travel or through study.

Such a provision should also consider the manner in which teachers are paid. Tenure teachers should receive a steady income and all salaries should be paid on a twelve-month basis for the legally required number of teaching days each year, as provided by the state, whether it be 180 or 190 days more or less. Bills for food, rent, and other living expenses must be paid twelve months of the year. The fact that a teacher has a long vacation is no reason for requiring him to be without income during two months of each year.

It is an established fact that teachers feel a much stronger sense of stability, and worry less—and that fewer of them perform other jobs during the summer—if they have a regular income. It is not good to have teachers tired and worn out from trying to earn a few extra dollars during the two summer months. The necessity for teachers to wait three months for the first pay day each year, after vaca-

tion, is a reflection on the whole school organization. The situation develops a psychosis in many teachers—especially those with families—and causes unpleasant reactions that indirectly affect their pupils in school.

In the Committee's recommendation there is a provision for health and accident insurance, but there should also be insurance for liability while a teacher is acting within the scope of his duties. Only four states protect a teacher in any way on this score.

Forty-seven (or forty-eight) states give no protection against any action that may be taken by a child or parent against a teacher. The number of such actions against teachers seems to be on the increase as the years go by.

Recommendation II

The second recommendation states that tenure should be granted to teachers of successful teaching experience as shown during a probationary period (a three-year probationary period is common).

This is a good recommendation. It should also provide that boards of education may place teachers on tenure prior to the expiration of a probationary period. Practice in New York State, for example, requires that no teacher may be put on tenure until the probationary period is completed. A teacher may not know prior to the July meeting of the board of education whether he will be on tenure or be dismissed at a time of the year when it is extremely difficult to obtain a new position.

The statute should require that a probationary teacher be notified ninety days prior to the expiration of the probationary period if he is not to be given tenure.

Recommendation III

This recommendation is highly desirable as a part of a tenure statute. It states that "Careful initial selection by the employing board is essential; teachers who meet the employer's standards should be granted tenure."

Recommendation IV

Number IV is important: "Tenure should be granted to all teachers, supervisors, and administrators, whether in rural, village, or city schools."

The right of tenure should not be a special right reserved for a special group of teachers. Probably no more messy situation exists than that in New York State, where several kinds of tenure and non-tenure areas exist. All teachers throughout a state should be treated alike, as state employees.

This situation is unfair to pupils and unjust to the taxpayers, since the best teachers leave the non-tenure areas as soon as possible and obtain positions in tenure areas. Thus non-tenure areas tend to get the poorer teachers and the children suffer. In other cases, new and untried teachers use the non-tenure positions to acquire training and experience, only to leave later for more security elsewhere. This is the general rule. While there are exceptions, they are few.

Recommendation V

The Committee words the fifth recommendation as follows: "Tenure should be granted automatically, when a new law is passed, to all teachers under contract who have met requirements as to training and service."

This is a wise provision for any statute—and present statutes should be revised to comply with it.

We have had actual cases where teachers continue to teach beyond the probationary period only to discover that they have no tenure because the law requires a recommendation from the superintendent of schools and a formal passing of a resolution of the board of education, and this had not been done at the close of the probationary period.

No doubt a teacher could bring an action for damages against the superintendent for failure to make his recommendation for or against, since such a recommendation is a required ministerial act. A case in Buffalo, N.Y., is an excellent example of this type of negligence on the part of the superintendent.

A teacher not only taught the required probationary period but a number of years thereafter. She thought she was on tenure. During the depression she was dismissed and when the case was heard no evidence could be produced to show that the teacher had been recommended by the superintendent for tenure. Tenure was avoided by this unfair and unjust practice.

There is but one way to prevent such evasion of the law. Tenure should be automatic, and if the teacher is not to be allowed tenure, he should be so notified at least three months prior to the completion of his probationary period. Six months would be a fairer length of time.

(To be continued)

Is This True in Your Faculty?

Some weeks ago in a municipal election in one of our Florida communities a very small vote was cast. It was a very important election in which a number of vital decisions concerning every person in that community were to be decided.

The morning after the election the subject of the small vote came into the conversation among a group of the teachers gathered in the office before school. There were seven teachers in that group and one by one, four out of the seven owned up to the fact that they had not voted. Each one said, "I meant to vote but . . ." and there followed an array of watery, weak excuses, not one legitimate reason in the lot!

The other three teachers did not say anything, but one of the three began to wonder. "Is this the way we practice what we preach? Is this typical of this faculty or did all the non-voting members

just accidentally happen to get together?" There was only one way to find out. Check with the registration records. That check was made and believe it or not only *two* teachers out of that faculty of more than fifty had gone to the polls and voted!

The motto for this year for educators of the United States is "The Teacher Molds the Nation's Future." If the teachers of the United States fail to exercise the first privilege and duty of the citizen in this democracy, what kind of molding for this nation's future can we expect?

The Classroom Teacher organizations of Florida and every state could perform no greater service for the nation than to make immediate and diligent efforts to see that the members exercise the RIGHT and consider it a DUTY TO VOTE in every election.—MARY E. SNOODY in *Journal of Florida Education Association*.

BOOK REVIEWS

KIMBALL WILES and EARL R. GABLER, *Review Editors*

One Hundred Years Ago—American Writing of 1847, edited by JAMES P. WOOD. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1947. 518 pages, \$5.

One may open this book at random, read for a short time, and find himself transported into a totally different world. The wide range in the scope of the selections enables one to get an excellent cross section of the life and thought of 1847. Through romance, biography, travel, speeches, adventure tales, poetry, and diaries we get the feeling of the age.

We penetrate the southland with Prescott; we pursue the diary of a famous actress; we hear again the speeches of Lincoln and Webster; we are thrilled by adventure tales of Melville and Cooper; we peep at transcendentalism via Emerson and Channing. We read Nile's "coverage" of the Battle of Buena Vista and contrast it with Ernie Pyle's reports in World War II.

The choice of selections is delightful!

STELLA H. SFRAGUE

Director of Secondary Education
Bradford, Pa., City School District

Public-School Publicity—A Practical Guide for Teachers and Administrators, by GUNNAR HORN. New York: Inor Publishing Co., 1948. 226 pages, illustrated, \$3.50.

"The American way cannot be saved except through an intelligent home defense of a vigorously American citizenship for which the basis is laid in the public schools," writes Belmont Farley, Director, Press and Radio, NEA, Washington, D.C., in the Foreword to Gunnar Horn's new book, *Public-School Publicity*.

Mr. Horn, head of the English Department and Director of Publications, Benson High School, Omaha, Neb., has furnished a 226-page Practical Guide for Teachers and Administrators. From the "Prologue: Publicize or Perish" through the "Epilogue: Beat the Drums," the publication adviser finds an answer to his questions on the publicity problems of elementary and secondary schools.

The book is timely. It has a definite and worthy charge: to furnish adequate techniques to personnel engaged in promoting an effective public-relations program. Mr. Horn has had much experience with school publications and school publicity.

Practical, down-to-earth advice fills the pages, yet the style is chatty, readable. This is not an exercise

book, rather it is a where-to-find, how-to-write game for the modern Eve, Pandora, and Lot's wife. Mr. Horn contends, "Those three gals had what it takes—a good, healthy sense of curiosity."

The public-minded superintendent, realizing his responsibility as an authoritative news source, will profit especially by Chapter 19, "The Student News Bureau." "Much school news is worthy of wider circulation than can be achieved by the school paper," says Mr. Horn. "It has a real place in the community newspaper where it can reach not only parents, but all the citizens and taxpayers who are the supporters and trustees of the public schools."

This book is comprehensive. Chapter 21, "A House Organ for the Schools," is included for schools in metropolitan cities that publish their own bulletins, circulars, or magazines "issued primarily for the stimulation and information of the staff members."

With radio here to stay, Mr. Horn suggests, "Radio offers the schools an opportunity more magical than anything Aladdin ever dreamed. School publicists will find it abundantly worthwhile to do a little rubbing on the lamp."

Mr. Horn believes in public-school publicity. By following his suggestions, written in the A, B, C's of newspaper style—accuracy, brevity, and clarity—advisers and administrators can promote the ideas and the ideals of the American way of life.

The 28 illustrations are by Kay White.

MAUDE SHANKS STAUDENMAYER

Juneau High School

Milwaukee, Wis.

President, National Association of
Journalism Directors

Biology and Human Affairs (New Ed.), by JOHN W. RITCHIE. Yonkers-on-Hudson, N.Y.: World Book Company, 1948. 818 pages, \$3.40.

In this new edition of *Biology and Human Affairs*, the author presents a "different" approach to subject matter by attempting to compromise between the type study and the principles method of organization. Throughout the book, the evolutionary principle appears as a unifying thread. The author has managed to compress a tremendous amount of interesting information within the 800 pages of text, thus following the recent (perhaps regrettable) trend toward a volume of excessive bulk and weight.

On the whole, the text is well written in fairly

simple language, but the encyclopedic nature of the book encourages the use of an excessive number of technical terms (*mesozoic gymnosperms*, etc.). This makes it necessary to add a twelve-page glossary to the appendix. At the end of each unit there are a bibliography, a number of suggested activities, and a unit comprehension test. In the latter, thought questions are conspicuously absent.

The book closes with a curious section ostensibly dealing with the social traits of man and "the Constitution of the United States as a sound Biological document." Some of the more objectionable statements found in the previous edition have been deleted from this section.

Biology and Human Affairs is packed with interesting material. The teacher who would use it wisely, however, must exercise more than ordinary perspicacity in selecting from it suitable materials for the use of his pupils.

CHARLES TANZER
DeWitt Clinton High School
New York City

Essentials of Radio, by MORRIS SLURZBERG and WILLIAM OSTERHELD. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1948. 806 pages, \$4.

This volume truly represents a real contribution

to the teaching of radio science. And it surely is about time that such a book made its appearance. Those of us who have labored these many years to teach radio science theory to high-school students have keenly felt the lack of an adequate text. *Essentials of Radio* really fills the bill. Though some shortcomings are inevitable in a first edition, the creditable features outshine the occasional error and, no doubt, subsequent editions will remove even these flaws.

The many excellent questions and problems at the end of each chapter (762 questions and 420 problems with answers, not to mention the illustrative problems sprinkled throughout) provide ample opportunity for exercising the knowledge gained from reading this monumental work. The book is illustrated by ample diagrams and photographs and augmented by pertinent bibliographies and appendices.

There is no other technical radio publication on the high-school level to compare with the completeness, the readability, and the organization of this first real textbook in radio science for high schools.

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Occupational Pamphlets (An Annotated Bibliography), by GERTRUDE FORRESTER. New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1948. 354 pages, \$2.50.

How many times have you been desperate for that authentic, recent, suitable, and available pamphlet on a specific occupation? Where to find it?

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brarians, and teachers can quickly discover where to find that particular occupational pamphlet needed so badly at the moment. This book is a *must* for our bookshelves.

CHARLOTTE A. HEUSS

Director of Guidance

Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., Schools

Child Growth through Education, by GERTRUDE HILDRETH. New York: The Ronald Press, 1948. 437 pages, \$4.

Because of its emphasis upon the importance of unified learning as a basic principle in the psychology of learning as well as in the development of a curriculum, *Child Growth Through Education* fills an important need in educational literature. The book is designed as a basic text for teacher-training courses in elementary education. However, the author has deliberately cut across the lines which traditionally separate the elementary and secondary schools.

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In the words of the author, "Here are reflected the principles of unified learning as applied to relatedness in school activities, to unification and synthesis in the school program, to the selection of subject matter, to the teaching of skills, to life in the school, to school-community and school-parent relations, to training in intercultural understanding, to pupil guidance, and to the teacher's new role as a guide in learning."

Dr. Hildreth's scholarship has reached beyond the printed page into a wide diversity of classroom experiences. Her emphasis upon guidance, upon the need for community experiences, upon a parent program, and upon the values of group planning make a valuable contribution. Those who question the validity of a defined sequence in the school program may be disappointed with Dr. Hildreth's identification of experiences for the various grade levels. Since her purpose, however, is to discuss the bases for existing unified programs rather than to evaluate curriculum revision, it would appear that it is best served by leaving the door open for both the most conservative and the most radical developments in unified learning. This she has done effectively, and the effectiveness of her work is enhanced by the data which she has included in the last chapter, entitled "Evaluation of Results with the Unified Program."

CHANDOS REID
Teachers College
Columbia University

Living and Planning Your Life: Making a Choice (Book 3—Grade 9). *Living with Others* (Book 4—Grade 10). By N. WILLIAM NEWSOM, HARL R. DOUGLASS, and HARRY L. DOTSON. Gunnison, Colorado: Monarch Book Company, 1948. Book 3, 248 pages, \$2.00; Book 4, 226 pages, \$2.00.

In this series of student texts, Doctor Newsom and his associates have assembled guide material in a large number of matter-of-fact problems that confront boys and girls in the high school. It would be a mistaken idea to assume that most good schools are not meeting these problems, without the aid of any text. But having the problems clearly defined and systematically arranged should aid busy teachers in finding a base from which discussion can grow.

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FORREST E. LONG

Education for an Industrial Age, by ALFRED KAHLER and ERNEST HAMBURGER. Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1948. 334 pages, \$3.75.

Education for an Industrial Age explores the present status of vocational education and training in the United States, evaluates trends, and suggests the directions in which vocational education may move in the future. The relationship between the economic structure and the educational system of the United States is stressed and the growing divergence between the education currently provided for our young people and the requirements of the economy and of the worker is pointed out. The authors indicate that the present educational system is heavily overweighted on the side of preparation for professional pursuits, while for the vast sector of the labor force whose work depends on manual skills and technical knowledge there are insufficient training opportunities.

The volume grew out of a research project on "Technological Trends and the Flexibility of Labor," in which the Institute of World Affairs was engaged from 1943 to 1947. The authors do not conceive vocational education in the traditionally narrow sense. The core of the study is occupational preparation for work. This is considered an integral part of education.

Education for an Industrial Age traces the growth of vocational education in our secondary schools, in our technical institutes, in our revived apprenticeship programs, and in numerous on-the-job training schemes. The recommendations which conclude the study are rather purile and disappointing. In the "Introduction" the authors lavishly bestow doctor's degrees upon many who assisted in the study, but who do not possess these degrees.

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SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

(Continued from page 178)

tion, were forthcoming: (1) that some teachers went to their principals and asked how he wanted them to answer certain questions; (2) that some principals "dictated" to teachers the answers they were to give; (3) that some superintendents had principals collect the filled-in questionnaires from the teachers for examination. If these rumors are true, said the editorial on the survey, "somebody has violated a code of ethics, somebody has assumed prerogatives not rightly his, and somebody has weakened the reliability of the survey. It's a big ugly IF!"

COMICS: A 6-point code of ethics has appeared in the comic-book field, says the *New York Star*. The code was announced by the Association of Comics Magazine Publishers, which has as members 14 of the nation's comic-book publishers. For what it's worth, the code has something to say about: playing sex down; presenting crime as bad, and cops as good; avoiding scenes of "sadistic torture"; keeping slang to a minimum and shunning vulgar and obscene language; presenting divorce as neither funny nor glamorous; and avoiding ridicule or attack on any religious or racial group. Do you feel relieved?

CONTROVERSY: *Teaching Controversial Issues* is a free 32-page pamphlet published by Junior Town Meeting League, 400 South Front St., Columbus 15, Ohio. There are sections on formulating a policy for teaching of controversial issues; their place in the curriculum; teacher's part in setting the stage; classroom techniques; use of materials; evaluating the results; and the training of classroom teachers.

CHEERS: In August, 72 teen-agers, pretty well tuckered out, probably, returned to their homes from a summer session at the nation's only school for cheerleaders, at Sam Houston State College, Huntsville, Tex. The faculty was composed of cheer leaders from 5 Texas colleges, says an Associated Press story. Instruction included coaching on procedure for the student's own school cheer, writing of new cheers, tumbling, speechmaking, and yell leading. Since most of the students were girls, the art of showing legs off to best advantage was covered—well, included. Grades of the students were reported to their high-school principals, who may have sat wondering why any young person needed instruction in noise making.

THINK: Recently 72 of the most distinguished alumni of Iowa State University were asked to state

(Continued on page 192)

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SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

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what they considered the most valuable result of their university training, reports Myril Axelrod in the New York *Star*. The majority rated "ability to think" most important, and "mastery of subject matter" least important.

SHOW BUSINESS: The High School of Performing Arts was opened in September by the Board of Education of New York City, states the New York *Herald Tribune*. The new school is located near Times Square, in the theatrical district. Its 350 students will be prepared for careers in radio, music, dancing, and the theater. The curriculum includes conventional high-school subjects. But many of the classrooms have been converted into theaters, dance studios, radio studios, and musical rehearsal rooms.

PROBERS: New Jersey now has a 5-man commission appointed by the Governor to probe Communistic and un-American activities in the State's schools, states the New York *Star*. Head of the probers is Nicol H. Memory. On the past performance of similar groups, New Jersey teachers will not rise and sing "Thanks for the Memory."

BUILDING: An investigation of the newest requirements and methods of design and construction of public-school buildings is announced by the American Institute of Architects. Co-sponsors of the research project are the AIA and the Producers' Council, national organization of building products manufacturers. The U. S. Office of Education will cooperate. Aside from housing, states Walter A. Taylor, of the AIA, the largest volume of needed construction in the country is in public-school buildings. "The magnitude of the need requires that there be economy in planning and construction without sacrifice of safety, low maintenance cost, and satisfactory architectural character." Most of the present school-building types, says Mr. Taylor, have been rendered more or less obsolete by changes in educational methods. These methods call for "larger classrooms approximating square plan-shapes, which in turn involve new problems of natural and artificial lighting, acoustics, and ceiling construction."

The research project is planned to lead to construction of flexible experimental buildings—probably teachers' college demonstration schools—where "all elements of the problem may be tried in various combinations."